

JAN. 1944

No. 961

THE  
**CORNHILL**

Contributors include

*Max Beerbohm  
John Betjeman  
Elizabeth Bowen  
Maurice Bowra  
Osbert Lancaster  
Rose Macaulay  
Raymond Mortimer  
John Piper  
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JOHN MURRAY

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v. 161

1944-1945

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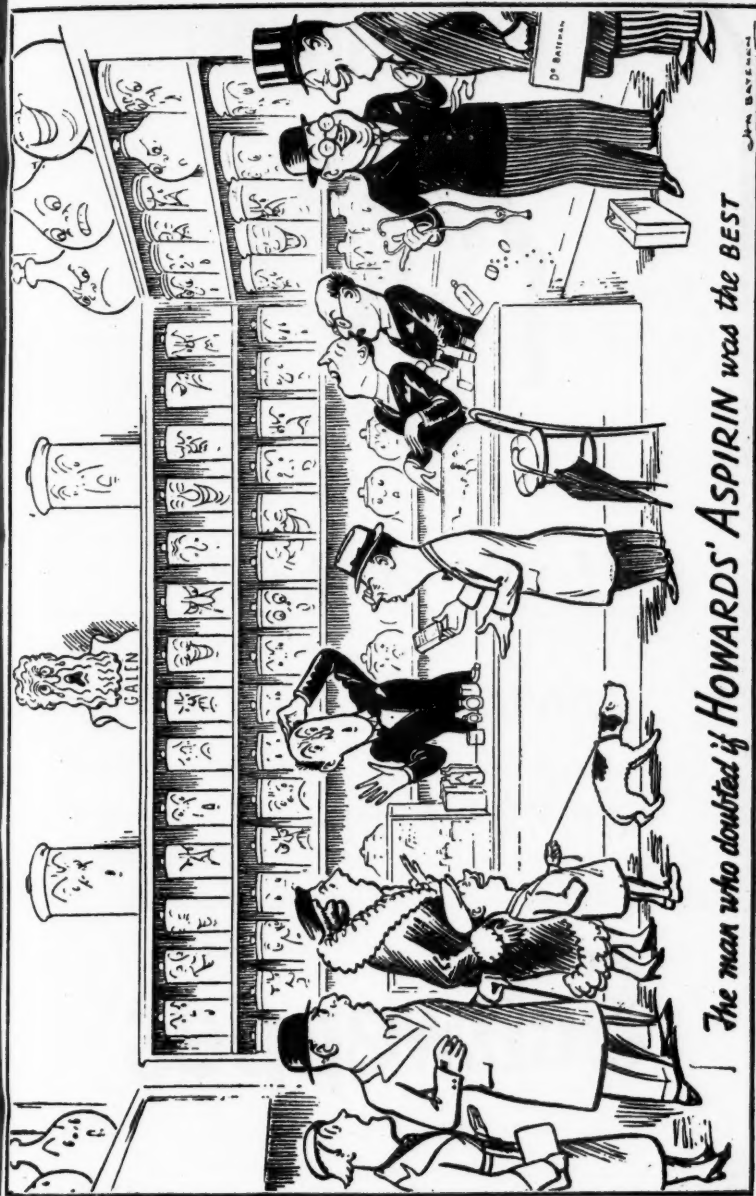
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# THE CORNHILL



No. 961

JANUARY 1944

## MAGAZINE

EDITED BY PETER QUENNEL

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JOHN MURRAY, 50 ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON, W.1

## ON BEGINNING AGAIN

Editorial Note by Peter Quennell

LIKE an armada of stout scarlet merchant-ships drawn up along a quayside, an hundred and sixty volumes crowd the opposite wall of the room. They are back numbers of the CORNHILL—from the earliest, launched with such ebullient Victorian enthusiasm by Thackeray in January 1860, to the latest (and, as it was then feared, the last) brought sadly into harbour under the able and dignified guidance of Lord Gorell in 1939. To examine the freight carried by those early volumes is an experience at once instructive and intimidating. Take the first volume. Here, rounded off in the leisurely, majestic nineteenth-century style with large cosy parentheses and spacious 'asides,' are serial-novels by the Editor himself, who contributed *Lovel the Widower*, and by Trollope, specially commissioned to produce *Framley Parsonage*. Here are articles on popular science and neat ephemeral verses by Hood and Monckton Milnes. But, neighbouring them, as one turns the page, suddenly appears Tennyson's *Tithonus*, a poem in which the strain of deep, harmonious pagan melancholy, characteristic of the finest productions of the poet's unsettled youth, breaks through the harshly conformist attitude of the famous and successful writer.

Early CORNHILLS, indeed, reflect both the solidity and the immense variety of Victorian literary development. Few great names of the period do not figure in the index. Thus, Matthew Arnold supplied some of his most splendid essays. John Ruskin, in *Unto This Last*, raised a nobly prophetic voice. The emergence of the woman writer is illustrated by the names of Charlotte and Emily Brontë, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Washington Irving spoke for the New World. George Augustus Sala exemplified the growth of popular British journalism. As the eye moves rapidly down the line of assembled volumes, it takes in Monckton Milnes' eccentric protégés, Algernon Charles Swinburne and Richard Burton, pauses at Dickens, Stevenson, Meredith, Wilkie Collins, and arrives at a more recent period with Vernon Lee and Leslie Stephen, Edmund Gosse and John Addington Symonds, Hardy and Henry James, Max Beerbohm and G. M. Trevelyan, Julian and Aldous Huxley.

Who precipitated this remarkable output, and who controlled it? The main credit for planning the CORNHILL must go to an enterprising London publisher, George Smith (head of the firm of Smith, Elder, from whom John Murray acquired the paper in 1917)<sup>1</sup>, a man whose

<sup>1</sup> Reginald Smith, who had edited the paper till his death, was then succeeded by Dr. Leonard Huxley, who was himself followed by Lord Gorell.

great business acumen and knowledge of human foibles was in direct proportion to his superabundant energy. Two financial anecdotes—for he was primarily a businessman—may serve to demonstrate the dashing spirit with which he conducted his affairs, and the almost romantic generosity of the relationship that prevailed between author and publisher. Trollope had asked three thousand pounds for a new serial; but Smith was obliged to confess that two thousand was a price beyond which he could not go. Trollope thereupon suggested that they should toss up for the difference:

‘I asked him, (continues Smith in his *Reminiscences*) if he wished to ruin me, and said that if my banker heard of my tossing authors for their copyrights he would certainly close my account; and what about my clerks? How I should demoralise them if they suspected me of tossing an author for his manuscript! We ultimately came to an agreement on my terms, which were sufficiently liberal. But I felt uncomfortable—I felt mean—I had refused a challenge. To relieve my mind, I said, “Now that is settled, if you will come over the way to my club, where we can have a little room to ourselves for five minutes, I will toss you for a thousand pounds with pleasure.” Mr. Trollope did not accept the offer.’

Equally illuminating is the story of Smith’s dealings with George Eliot, from whom (perhaps somewhat less perspicaciously than usual) he had commissioned *Romola*. He had offered ten thousand pounds, on the understanding that the book was to be divided into sixteen serial parts; but, when the novel was nearly finished, George Eliot found that her æsthetic conscience forbade her to sub-divide it into more than ten. Smith explained he would be a heavy loser; whereat the novelist, although she declined to compromise, begged that he would work out a new scale of remuneration, based on the issue of only ten instalments. Two thousand five hundred pounds were eventually dropped from the fee—a sacrifice to which the conscientious craftswoman willingly resigned herself, but with which Mr. Lewes (we are told) was far less satisfied.

Such was the adventurous background of the Victorian publishing world. But more decisive was the existence of the great Victorian public, prosperous, leisured, progressive, eager for enlightenment. On the re-launching of a paper that it once wafted to success—an hundred and twenty thousand copies were sold of the first issue and ‘along Cornhill itself nothing was to be seen but people carrying bundles of the orange-coloured magazine,’ while Thackeray who had fled to Paris grew almost hysterical with excitement, threatened to run wild among the *bijoutiers* of the Palais Royal and could not sleep he declared, ‘for counting up his subscribers’—the question arises whether such a public, or any fraction of public corresponding to it, is still to be discovered.

One may doubt if a modern publisher can afford to toss for thousands. There will be no need to restrain the present Editor from rushing in a frenzy of elation to the nearest jeweller's shop. Our paper is rationed. Many contributors, whom we should otherwise hope to enlist, are lost temporarily to literature in one of the fighting services or have succumbed to the Circean spell of a government department, where they squander among official files the intelligence and creative gusto they might spend upon their manuscripts. Has the modern public a taste for serious writing? Are readers yet to be found for the full-length essay? Can we presume to set sail without a political flag? It is because we believe the answer to these tormenting questions is definitely 'yes,' and because the contemporary demand for good writing seems to exceed the supply that after a brief suspension the CORNHILL sets forth again. The policy behind its new avatar is extremely simple—to collect from as many fields of literature as are open to us, as much intelligent work as we can lay our hands on, but to print nothing, either by the young or the old, that we do not ourselves admire. Wherever possible illustrations by modern artists will supplement the productions of modern writers. So long as the war lasts, the CORNHILL must be limited to three or four numbers every year; but, later, it will be re-established on a regular monthly footing. With these plans and these aspirations—a lively sense of its debt to the past and a firm belief in the continuity of literary past and future—the CORNHILL starts out on a new and momentous voyage, towards the unpredictable landscape of 1944.

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*The Cover of the new CORNHILL has been adapted by John Piper from the original cover design of 1860, the work of Godfrey Sykes 'A Young Student at the South Kensington Schools of Art,' now preserved in the Department of Engraving at the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

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The Editor asks that all contributions should be addressed to 50 Albemarle Street, London, W.1 and accompanied by a stamped envelope.

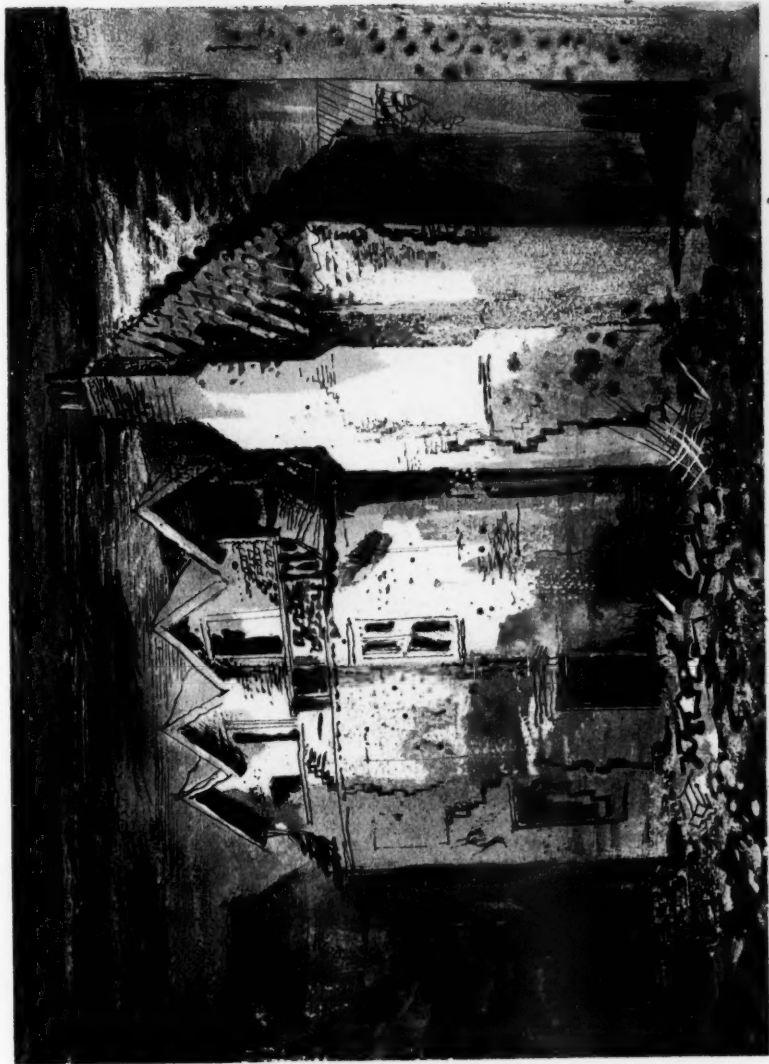




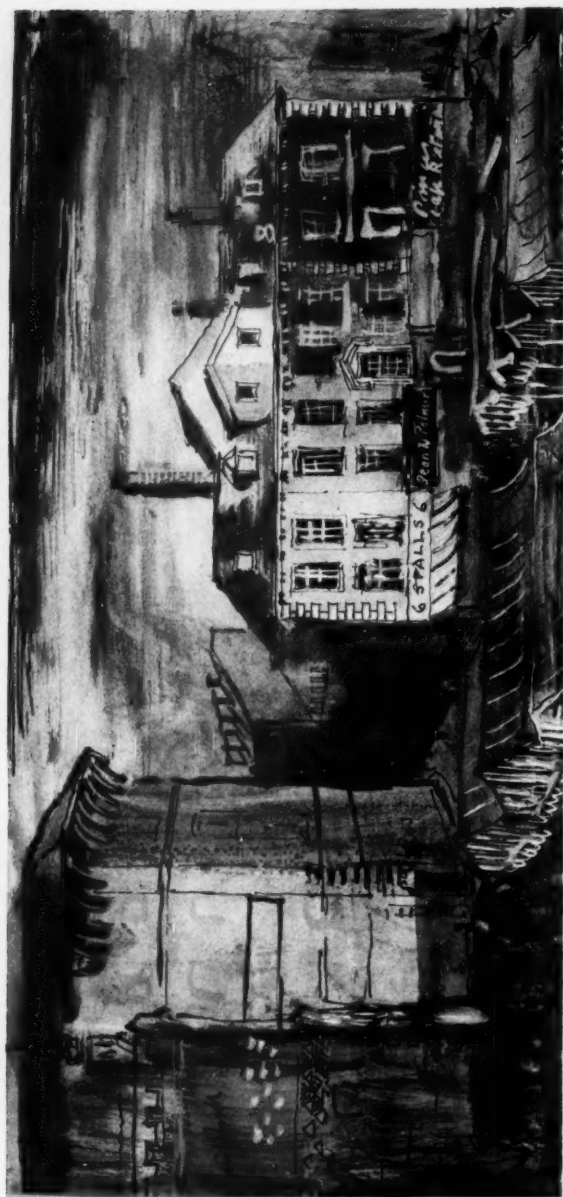
FROM MOUSEHOLD HEATH



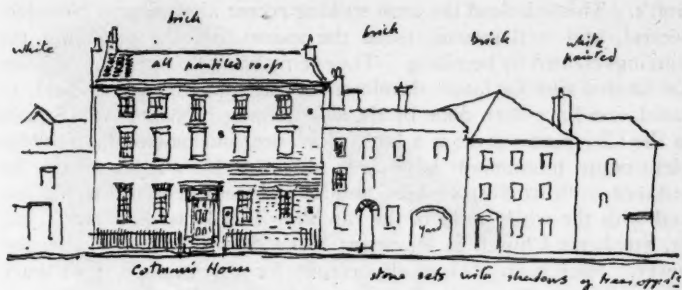
ST. BENEDICT'S



BOMBED HOUSE IN MAGDALEN STREET



MARKET PLACE



## TOPOGRAPHICAL LETTER FROM NORWICH

*(Illustrated with notes for painting)*

BY JOHN PIPER

October 13, 1943.

THE train down here was full of clergymen and American soldiers. The clergymen easily explain themselves. There are between thirty and forty old churches in Norwich as well as a good many modern ones, and a cathedral, and there are more churches in Norfolk (the incumbents of which must visit London sometimes) than in all three Ridings of Yorkshire put together. As to the Americans, they are everywhere. It is hard to see the city at the moment on account of them. Sometimes, in the streets, it seems quite a change to hear an East Anglian accent.

Norwich today, like most other 'historic' towns, is in a state of arrested development. Development was going on sporadically, but on the whole pretty rapidly, before the war. Sites were being cleared as leases fell in, or were being hastened in; car parks were laid down, flanked by blocks of new buildings in the neo-Georgian and *moderne* styles: 'utterly soulless', as guide-books used to say of eighteenth-century churches. The most spectacular change involved the clearing of a large number of old-fashioned shops and houses on the higher, west, side of the Market Place, to make way for a mammoth municipal building in the Swedish taste—the most prominent of its kind in the country. This horror of the 'thirties has position with no sense of presence, and magnitude with no sense of scale. It looks neither better nor worse by moonlight. Fog is its friend. But when there is no fog it appears in every prospect of the city, from far and near, rearing its unwanted tower above St. Peter Man-

croft's. This is indeed the most striking recent alteration in Norwich. Second, and well second, come the spaces and the gaps and the scarrings created by bombing. The enemy being no respecter of leases has cleared sites for future development more usefully than would, or could, ever have been done by the city planners. Near Orford Square in the City centre there is a large clearance, and new views of several picturesque monuments have been disclosed by it: the castle, for instance, with its Norman keep and its eighteenth-century stylisations and with the white walls of the rambling Bell Hotel beneath it, and St. Stephen's Church in Rampant Horse Street, with its variegated tower. Here is an obvious opportunity for a permanent open space, not too cluttered up by yellow-leaved shrubs and war memorials.

The present state of Norwich is another proof of the curious fact that bombing intensifies the character of a town, if it had any character already. The blitz has made Bath, and Exeter and even heavily-scarred Bristol, more like themselves than ever. Like them, Norwich had great character, and now, in spite of tragedy, it has even more. Look at it today, and then look at Cotman's drawings of it. No painter has recorded the soul of a town—not only the shape of its buildings but its texture and its light—as well as Cotman recorded the soul of Norwich. In spite of the chain stores and the City Hall and the bombing he would have no difficulty in recognising it today. And he would find more subjects than ever. As to his plastered gable-ends—the plaster decaying just enough to disclose a few laths under the surface skin—there are a hundred more of these since the bombing began. Direct hits have torn away single houses in decent seventeenth-, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century blocks, exposing a round-headed plaster arch, or the matrix of a staircase, or the attractive wall-paper half-torn from party walls—party walls that, by reason of their materials and the angles of their gables, always seem to show East Anglian character. Houses are boarded up in the Cotman manner by the dozen. It is as though Norwich after a hundred years had modelled itself on Cotman, the architecture recreating itself after his water-colours. There is much debris in the city, much dust and much beauty. Now that development has for the time being ceased its hostilities the town becomes more like itself every day, bombing or no bombing. Before the war it was sick to death with commercialism, preservation, rejuvenation, and tourism; now, in spite of persistent air-raid warnings and bad damage it is healthy enough, and ready to fight its own city councillors again. Better a war-veteran than a museum-piece.

The cathedral and most of the best churches survive. The cathedral, the later decorations and additions to which were always governed by the solid, shapely, Norman core, is untouched so far by the war. The interior is still cool and pale, and a little over-



*Chapel Field House*

cleanly; the dramatic early Gothic Revival glass in the west window (always dismissed as 'modern') as beautiful as ever. The bosses in the cloister have all been re-coloured according to the right medieval principles, but without a trace of the medieval emotion, so that for one visitor at least they will not be very attractive till the colours



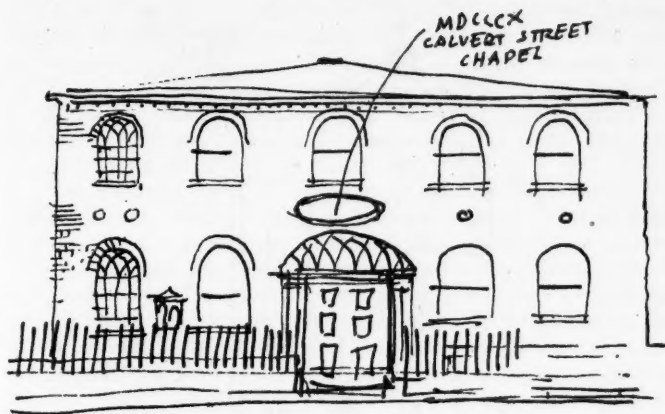
fade again. (Here is the accursed English historical sense at work again. The bosses must be re-coloured because they *were* coloured ; not because we all feel they would be much nicer re-coloured. Which we don't, and which they aren't.)

Four old churches have been hit : two all but demolished. But over thirty remain. One seems never to be more than a hundred yards from a church. At a crossing, three or four are suddenly visible up a side street ; turning down a pavement from a north-porch door, another tall flint tower appears from behind a shop. From the castle keep, or from Mousehold Heath on its rising ground across the Wensum, the skyline is machicolated with towers. St. George's, Tombland, has the best interior ; quietly rich, its simple Perpendicular character is enhanced by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century features. One can still enjoy the spacious interiors of St. Giles, St. Laurence and St. Gregory, in spite of restoration and 'cathedral' glass ; and the impressive exterior of St. Michael Coslany remains untouched, with its elaborate patterning of dark flint set in pale stone that excited Cotman to make one of his best Norwich etchings, and that still appears as the classic example of 'flushwork' in textbooks on medieval architecture. Then there is St. George's, Colegate, locked, but holding the tomb of Old Crome ; and St. Andrew, where the poet Suckling appears as one of a group of kneeling children on the tomb of his parents ; the Great Hospital of St. Giles in Bishopgate, the chapel of which still has some box pews and a fine reredos ; and St. Peter Hungate, an unwanted church, which has been turned into



*St. George's, Tombland, from the Close*





a museum of ecclesiastical art, which means that it contains roof-bosses, bits of stone-carving, recorders, serpents and barrel-organs that suggest Hardyesque Evensong in East Anglia. And still there are a couple of dozen other churches. Two or three hard days' work, more tiring than visiting continental picture galleries, is needed for even a cursory view of all the churches. The faded yellow brick of St. Matthew's, near the gas works, is a representative of a whole class that makes no appearance in the guide-books. As to Non-conformist architecture, there is a great deal of merit. The Octagon Chapel, by Thomas Ivory, aroused Wesley's enthusiasm. Its pewing has been changed, but it remains imposing. And there is the old Quaker Meeting House, also in Colegate, with its severe brick façade, and a chaste interior in black and white—black columns with white capitals, black pews and white ceiling. (Bombs have destroyed a newer Meeting House.) And the Calvert Street chapel, sketched above, and many another.

But it is the domestic and commercial architecture that makes Norwich the wonderful city it is. In the pictures one carries away, dusty fronts of middle-class houses play a prominent part; houses with Greek-Revival doors, re-painted green in 1935 or so, with flattened round-headed fanlights over them, and brass plates on the doors with the names of limited companies that have taken them over. One recalls views through open doors down carpetless passages leading to imposing staircases; the extraordinary efflorescence of heavy Baroque that seems to have become fashionable in Norwich about 1906, and blossoms at its fullest in Telephone House, St. Giles'; and especially memorable are two views of the city from the bridge

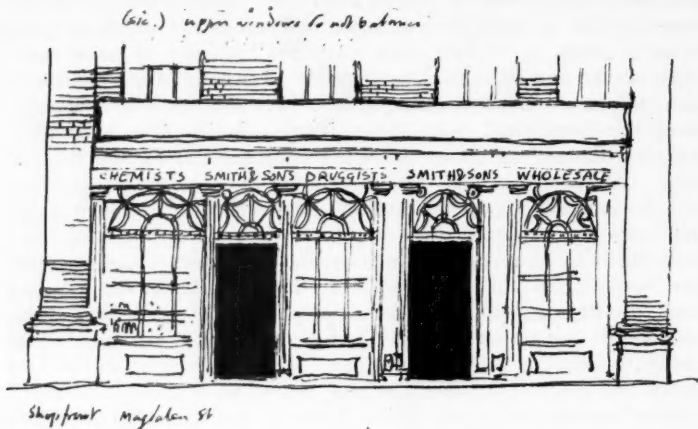


Messrs. Jarrold's Printing Works

over the Wensum near St. Martin's-at-Palace (where Cotman's house, over-large for an unprosperous artist, still stands). Neither of these views is noted by country-book writers; both are at once more Norwich-like and more exciting than the over-done plaster houses in Elm Hill, or any other picturesque bits. The first, looking westwards along the besmirched river, shows steam exhausts from brick-built factories blowing off above the water by timber yards and derelict sites. On the banks and beyond rise the flint towers of churches, and the irregular blocks of factories and warehouses. At first sight, this looks like any river-scape in any English town, but it narrows itself down to East Anglia soon enough, and finally looks intensely like Norwich, and like nowhere else. The dark brick, the pantiled roofs, the decrepit lath-and-plaster gable ends, the black flint of the towers—all contribute to the structure of the picture, and when one sorts them out they turn out to be the only elements the picture really contains. It is views like this, not views of quaint old-world cobbled streets, that really make Norwich residents abroad feel a nostalgia for home. They may not explain it to themselves, but it is so. It is the kind of view that is forgotten at committee meetings of even the best-intentioned preservation societies.

The other most memorable view is also from this bridge, looking in the other direction. The Wensum curves away towards the east and south, still with built up banks, beginning to half-circle the city towards Thorpe station. The view includes a palatial building of dark East Anglian bricks that now houses Messrs. Jarrold's printing works. A fading inscription on it, in raised Egyptian letters, reads 'Norwich Yarn Company, 1809.' This was part of a grandiose scheme of factory lay-out that was never completed, with balancing blocks on each side of the river, and other blocks westwards of them. It was not completed because it was begun after the turn of the tide of Norwich's main trade. 'In 1571 nearly 4,000 refugees had established themselves here, and in 1575 the Dutch settlers first invented and brought forward the stuff called bombasine, which long continued the staple commodity of Norwich. During the rule of Sir Robt. Walpole, and through his influence, the use of Norwich crapes (a silk and worsted fabric which had not long been invented) for public mournings, was always ordered in the "Gazette." The worsted trade of Norwich has for many years been declining, and is now so completely supplanted by Bradford, Halifax and Leeds, that the chief supply of worsted yarn is furnished to Norwich from Yorkshire, instead of being spun at home' (*Murray's Guide*, 1892 edn.).

The dome with its white-painted cupola, the rows of tall windows, the flat pilasters and stucco dressings, all speak of an architecture adapting itself to commercial uses that properly belonged to the



usages of the country house. It has more comments to make, this building, on the vanity of commercial aspiration and on the changing life of the city, than all the rather slender remains of medieval houses with their 'wealth of old beams' and their 'period flavour,' in which Norwich abounds. It also has more beauty; but that is a feeble argument. Yet if the Stranger's Hall and the Norwich Yarn Company's premises were both threatened tomorrow by a rebuilding scheme, a hundred voices would be raised in protest about the first half of the proposal, and none—or perhaps one low voice—about the second.

What is it that we want to preserve, and ought to preserve, when we talk of 'preserving' a town? What we do preserve is 'buildings of historic interest'—the poor servants of our nostalgia for the past—since we have little sense of which are the buildings of beauty. It is perhaps as well. If ever we developed a taste for the Georgian (no relation to our feeling of the fitness of Georgian for banks and post offices) and the Victorian, a taste for the simple well-proportioned brick façade and the cast-iron gate and veranda-front, once we had scheduled them all as ancient monuments and so had shorn go-ahead business enterprise of its architectural power, we should be doomed to live in vast and dead museums. Already, before the war, some of our better-preserved towns were beginning to look a little too good to be true, a little over-ripe, as if the friction of the motors and charabancs would shake them to the ground at any moment. They were becoming over-full of treasures, as well as of home-made tea-shops and antique shops. Guide-books still rail at the Victorians for their

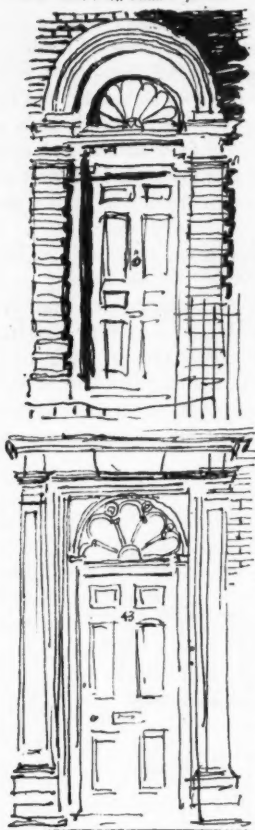
destructive 'restorations.' But it is hard to realise that conservative, well-informed, restoration is almost as much of a menace now. The sense of history is an apology for the absence of the sense of beauty: it is no substitute for it. It is no use crying over the destruction of a church or two when you allow your market place to be dominated by a building as negative in taste as the Norwich City Hall. It is a proof not only that you are unwilling to commit yourself here and now about new buildings (except as far as size goes—it is almost as big as money can buy), but that you do not care a jot about old ones.

There is nothing to be done about it. If after the war English towns and cities are to sink finally under the strain of fighting easy transport, international architectural styles, commercialism, and the kind of preservation that goes with a faint sense of history and no sense of beauty; if they are to lose the last vestiges of their own character, so that you cannot tell, walking in a suburb, whether you are in Clapham or Newcastle—well, they must sink. A super cinema and a crèche are either more or they are less fitting as contemporary



Maydalen St.

Two doors. All Saint's Green



amenities than a moot-hall and an old church. We cannot go on, for ever and ever, having both. No other age has ever expected to have its cake and eat it, in the way that we do about architecture. One of our troubles is that we dare not destroy all the buildings of the past because then there would be nothing left to copy. So we fight to keep some, with the development-schemers grumbling, and we grumble ourselves over those we cannot keep. The forces of the two factions will continue to fight: those whose policy would in the end make England into a continuous housing estate and those whose policy would make it into a continuous museum, in which all the exhibits are catalogued, and quite dead. The war has arrested the rot of 'development,' as we knew it in the 'twenties and 'thirties. But it has not done anything to solve this problem, which will soon be becoming acute again. There is one thing that we can do in the meantime—decide for ourselves which *are* the beautiful buildings, new and old, that we already have (not simply the historical buildings, and the imposing buildings, which any guide book tells us). It means using our eyes, and taking nothing for granted.

FRAGMENT OF A POEM  
FOR  
EMILY HEMPHILL

BELLS are booming down the bohreens,  
White the mist along the grass.  
Now the Julias, Maeves and Maureens  
Move between the fields to Mass.  
Twisted trees of small green apple  
Guard the decent whitewashed chapel,  
Gilded gates and grained oak doorway  
Through them both, the rich and poor way,  
Small—and smaller—holders pass.

Say how many congregations  
On the broidered vestment gaze,  
Murmur past the painted stations  
As Thy Sacred Heart displays  
Lush Kildare of scented meadows,  
Roscommon, thin in ash tree shadows,  
And Westmeath the lake reflected,  
Spreading Leix the hill protected,  
Kneeling all in silver haze.

In yews and woodbine, walls and guelder,  
Nettle-deep the faithful rest,  
Winding leagues of flowering elder,  
Sycamore with ivy dressed,  
Ruins in demesnes deserted,  
Bog-surrounded, bramble-skirted—  
Townlands rich or townlands mean as  
These, oh, counties of them screen us  
In the Kingdom of the West.

Stony seaboard, far and foreign,  
Stony hills poured over space,  
Stony outcrop of the Burren,  
Stones in every fertile place,  
Little fields with boulders dotted,  
Grey-stone shoulders saffron-spotted,  
Stone-walled cabins thatched with reeds,  
Where a Stone Age people breeds  
The last of Europe's stone age race.

Has it held, the warm June weather?  
Draining shallow seapools dry,  
When we bicycled together  
Down the bohreens fuchsia-high.  
Till there rose, abrupt and lonely,  
A ruined abbey, chancel only,  
Lichen-cruled, time-befriended,  
Soared the arches, splayed and splendid,  
Romanesque against the sky.

In walled and pinnacled protection,  
Apart, the planter family waits  
A Church of Ireland resurrection  
By the broken, rusty gates.  
Sheepswool, straw and droppings cover,  
Graves of spinster, rake and lover,  
Whose fantastic mausoleum  
Sings its own seablown Te Deum,  
In and out the slipping slates.

JOHN BETJEMAN



## AGAINST BASIC ENGLISH

BY ROSE MACAULAY

BASIC English has become, since Mr. Churchill accoladed it at Harvard, a solid and imposing, if questionable, upstart, now famous enough, and still eccentric enough, to be a popular butt and cockshy ; when it is mentioned in parliament, members make their feeblest jokes ; all the good ones have perhaps been made already by journalists, who have, as a rule, more wit. We have most of us contributed to these quips ; it is inevitable, for Basic English is comic, like mothers-in-law. The notion of foreigners being deliberately taught to speak English wrong must move all but the gravest Britons to mirth. More comic still is the notion of the English having to learn it too, in order to understand and reply to these poor foreigners. For Mr. Churchill says its use is to enable non-English speakers 'to participate more easily in our society,' and they would have little enough ease if they could not make head or tail of what we said to them. 'I have tried to explain,' added Mr. Churchill, justifiably annoyed by the weak and irrelevant jests of his colleagues, 'that people are quite purblind who discuss the matter as if Basic English were a substitute for the English language.' Nevertheless, if it is to be of any use at all between Britons and foreigners, it must on occasion be just this, and we must suppose that we are to be encouraged to learn to talk it. The ministerial committee appointed to investigate the subject includes Mr. Amery, who is presumably considering its use among Indians (if it were to replace Babu English, that would be a loss), Mr. Lyttleton, who is responsible for colonial speech, Mr. Brendan Bracken, who is, one supposes, weighing its advantages to international understanding, and Mr. Butler, who is concerned with English schools. Between them, they are (as I write) preparing a report. Meanwhile, the nation is mildly ranged in two camps, for and against (with, of course, that placidly ignorant section of Gallios who care for none of these things, who reply to Gallup Poll enquiries on any subject that they don't know and don't care).

It is obvious that we are in danger of being found on the wrong side in this matter, the side of the retrograde, the obscurantists, the purblind. The Basic forces are formidable. The tendency to conceive them, like other reformists, as Folk, jaegerish, sandalled, bearded, weaving, spinning and folk-dancing, adorned with button badges like their hated rivals the Esperantists, is a mistake. In the Basic van march an army of eminent progressives, supported by some, though by no means all, experienced teachers of English abroad, and

missionaries to the heathen, who believe (and I am told find) that here is a labour-saving short cut for their innocent charges. Behind amble the less enlightened ranks of those amiable and inexperienced souls who trustfully think that anything promised us by the Prime Minister (even such unappetising objects as blood, toil and sweat) must be rather nice to have. And in the rear, quiet and unobtrusive, gazing nonchalantly at the landscape, stroll the Patriots, who see in the spread of any variant of their native tongue a step towards turning the world into a kind of Anglo-Saxon Commonwealth of Nations. This is a view of the matter seen even more clearly by foreigners ; I have heard it trenchantly expressed by Frenchmen.

With this heavy-weight army against them, I feel that the anti-Basics must stick to their guns. I do not think their charges have been adequately met. There is a tendency to elude, to cover up awkward questions. I have been reading with care Dr. I. A. Richards's new book, *Basic English and its Uses*, which deserves careful perusal, both for what it says and what it omits. It must be granted that he makes out a strong case for the language being easy to acquire. The case for the advantages of a common tongue does not need arguing ; it would obviously be an enormous convenience. It would not necessarily lessen wars, or even 'aid immensely in ironing out boundary tensions' : it might even increase the latter, for what is said by those suffering from boundary tension is, as a rule, better not understood by those on the other side of the boundary. As Dr. Richards himself points out, radio, talking to each nation in its own tongue, encourages, on the whole, loyalty to the group, disloyalty to the planet. Still, without claiming too much for mutual comprehension, we most of us admit it a good aim. And the use of a common tongue by foreigners among themselves would increase it. The Russians and the Poles, the Chinese and the Japanese, the Italians and the French, could (should they desire to do so) understand one another's utterances, though not, I think, address to each other all those remarks customary between great contiguous nations. Though, if they consult the Basic dictionary, they may be gratified to find what they can say. They can say pig, dog and hyena (which figures in the dictionary as an 'international' term). You cannot call anyone a savage ; if you feel like that you must say 'early natural man' ; you cannot say brute, but 'rough animal,' nor barbarian, but 'person of no education, at a low stage of development.' It all takes time, but they do, presumably, get one another's meaning, for they have learnt the same idiom.

So much for international understanding between foreigners, that high, shining, and so far rather remote ideal. Passing to that other high and remote ideal, understanding between foreigners and us, the prospect looks less satisfactory. Unless we learnt to speak our lan-

guage in this particular way ourselves, we should not be much better off among foreigners than we are now. As to the foreigners, they would be in the same plight in intercourse with us that most of us are in abroad: we can talk to the native, selecting for use the words we know, but the native talking back knows no such consideration or limitations, and overwhelms us with a torrent of words that he knows and that we don't. I have no wish to make elementary jests on this subject, but it is a fact that the Basic foreigner in this country, if he asked the way somewhere and succeeded in making himself understood, would probably not grasp the answer, which is, as we know (unless it is a policeman, a taxi-driver or a postman who speaks), 'Sorry, I'm a stranger in these parts.' To be understood, the native would have to say, 'I am sad, troubled, or pained, or I have regret, I am a man from another place, or a strange man here.' Unless he has learned Basic, he will not say this. And so the Basic foreigner's day proceeds, frustrated, groping in the dark after his simplest needs. He cannot inform the police that he has lost his purse, though he can say (and perhaps this is near enough) that he has 'had a loss of his money-bag.' He has no lunch, but a middle-day meal; no dinner, but 'the important meal of the day'; if a friend should invite him to lunch or dinner, he will not even be aware that he is being asked to food. If he is asked what time he would like to be called in the morning, he cannot understand; they should have said, 'What time will I make you awake?' 'It is possible,' Dr. Richards assures us, 'to say in Basic English anything needed for the general purposes of everyday existence . . . in all the arts of living, in all the exchanges of knowledge, desires, beliefs, opinions and news.' To this one might reply, in the words of the nurse asked by her charge if it was possible to have children without being married, 'Quite possible, dear, but a pity.'

Yes, it is more than possible: in both these cases, it is only too easy, provided one condition is fulfilled. The condition is defined by Dr. Richards (in the case, naturally, of Basic English) as 'sympathetic co-operation' or 'mutual aid.' The native English speaker must, in fact, talk Basic too, and meet the foreigner half-way. 'Their success is a common triumph. An unusual candour on both sides, a simplicity which is not merely linguistic, often accompanies such efforts. Men then return to a fresher world in which the miracle of speech has regained its glory, become conscious again of the tenuousness and fragility of human contacts, and are readier to enjoy and honour them with sincerity. . . . The first stages of a beginner's progress are often lit by moments of peculiarly intimate communion.' It sounds a little like the experience of someone 'changed' by the Buchmanites. And it is quite easy. 'A few hours spent in serious study of the principles, and a little practice, enable most people to

write fairly freely in something near enough to strict Basic for all practical purposes.' Too true. The studied childishness, the careful agglomerations of small easy words till they add up to a verb or forbidden noun, the long ramble round instead of the terse short cut, the strained grammar, a kind of tough yet innocent silliness, the degraded diffuseness of a stunted barbarian vocabulary—these are oddly infectious, as readers of a certain school of modern English and American fiction know. It has the morbid fascination of solecism. ('The words employed may be English, but they may be combined in a way that is not English. This is solecism,' as the grammar-book says.) *Will* for *shall*, *would* for *should*, for example: Dr. Richards himself catches this. He writes a Basic paragraph: 'In later pages I will be attempting to say how they do it. . . . Only then will we see . . .,' etc. He translates it into ordinary English; but his final sentence begins in the same way, 'Only then will we see.' He has become so far corrupted as to leave the *will* unchanged. This corruption (Dr. Richards perhaps calls it co-operation) will, I believe, overtake sooner or later all English speakers who learn to use Basic. The Englishman abroad will pick it up almost unconsciously; helped by newspapers, radio, and daily conversation, he will 'go native'; it may be as easy a trick to acquire as drug-taking, and as hard to throw off. Soon its addicts will scarcely know which language they are speaking; then the stage will arrive when ordinary English sounds wrong to them, pedantic, obscure, verb-ridden, full of 'strange ink-horn terms'; in short out of the mode. Those who say *ask* instead of *make a request* or *put a question*, *destroy* for *make destruction of*, *shave* for *take the hair off*, *buy* for *get in exchange for money* at a store, *sweat*, for *drops of heat* (Mr. Churchill take note), will sound curt and abrupt by the side of the new elongated, attenuated, sapless speech. After a few years of it, common English will be rusty on the tongue; the Basic-taught child will grow up unable to read English literature, so full of words he has not learnt that *Robinson Crusoe* will look to him more obscure than Chaucer looks now. Poetry will be a closed book to him. His reason and integrity will be affected; he will be told that, though he may not say 'I have brushed the dog,' he may say 'The dog lets itself be brushed,' because the second brushed is an adjective, not a verb. If he knows it to be a passive verb, he must forget it. His theology and natural history will suffer, when his Basic dictionary tells him that an angel is 'a being with wings'; instead of learning that it is 'a subordinate superhuman being in monotheistic religions,' he will be confusing it with wasps and sparrows. His knowledge of the facts of life will suffer; he will be led to believe a virgin and an unmarried woman the same thing, with the prophet in his Basic Bible exclaiming, 'Behold, an unmarried woman will be with child.' (And yet this Bible boasts that it 'offers a valuable

corrective to the loose and ambiguous use of words.') His sense of economy will be ruined, having three or four words thrust on him to express what had been better said in one. Such weak extensionism is a step in the wrong direction : there is too much of it already, and new forms of language should take the opportunity to compress. There are certain stock phrases, for instance, often used just now, that might well be expressed, to save time, in one sound : the freedom-loving peoples might be *freeps*, the cause of freedom and democracy, *frick*, the fight against the forces of evil, *fivele*, the British way of life, *brife*, and so on. Ugly, no doubt, but at least not diffuse.

To our already deplorable use of our native tongue, threatened and debased on all sides by jargon, wrong constructions, solecisms, genteelisms, parvenu pronunciations, are we, in order to help foreigners in their Basic English, to add the deliberate stunting, distortions, circumlocutions and impoverishment of this clumsy changeling ? Its sponsors are insinuating. 'Official encouragement from governments,' Dr. Richards persuasively suggests, 'school systems, and other bodies, could be a great help. So could the action of powerful individuals.' (A hint to the Prime Minister ?)

The scheme of Mr. Ogden and his able followers is clear : they want the thing taught in English schools. They are intellectuals, with a feeling for literature and language ; they have no wish to make destruction of the English tongue. They call Basic a ladder to fuller English, and believe it can be knocked away when its tutelary purpose is achieved. That would be an odd situation indeed, should foreigners, having mounted the ladder, be left conversing, reading and writing in excellent English with one another, while the natives, having corrupted themselves with Basic to oblige them, walked down the ladder rung by rung. . . . So great cultures go under, change hands.

## FENESTRALIA

BY MAX BEERBOHM

"THE mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?"

A vivid scene, this, is it not? You *see* it, *hear* it; and you are moved by its dramatic irony, knowing what the mother does not know; knowing what Jael has done.

"And when Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Imri peace that slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs."

Some dramatic irony here, too. Jezebel knows not, as do we, how imminent her doom is. But the irony is less poignant, forasmuch as Jezebel is not a sympathetic personage. We cannot, with the best will in the world, feel very sorry for her. Nevertheless, her words haunt us as do those of the mother of Sisera. Thanks, in some measure, to Coverdale, to Tyndale? No doubt. But also because her words were spoken, like those others, from a window.

Had either of those women been seated in a room, or walking in a garden, or looking across a wall, we should be far less impressed. People seen or things said indoors or out-of-doors have not the same arresting quality as things said or people seen half-indoors, half-out. There is much virtue in a window. It is to a human being as a frame is to a painting, as a proscenium to a play, as "form" to literature. It strongly defines its content. It excludes all but what it encloses. It rivets us. In fact, it's a magic casement.

I have set eyes on many great men, in my time, and have had the privilege of being acquainted with some of them (not of knowing them well, understanding them well, for to do that there must be some sort of greatness in oneself). And of all the great men whom I have merely seen the one who impressed me most was Degas. Some forty years ago I was passing, with a friend, through the Place Pigalle; and he, pointing up his stick to a very tall building, pointing up to an open window *au cinquième*—or was it *sixième*?—said, "There's Degas." And there, in the distance, were the head and shoulders of a grey-bearded man in a red béret, leaning across the sill. There Degas was, and behind him, in there, was his studio; and behind him, there in his old age, was his life-work; and with



unaging eyes he was, I felt sure, taking notes of the "values" and what not of the populous scene down below, regretting perhaps (for he had never cast his net wide) the absence of any ballet-dancers, or jockeys, or laundry-girls, or women sponging themselves in hip-baths; but deeply, but passionately observing. There he was, is, and will always be for me, framed.

Not perhaps a great, but certainly a gifted and remarkable man was Dr. Jowett, at first and last sight of whom, driving along the Broad in a landau, more than half a century ago, I, a freshman, experienced a mild thrill. How much less mild must have been the thrill vouchsafed to that party of visitors whom C. S. Calverley was showing over Balliol many years earlier! "There," said Calverley, "is the Jowler's window. And," he added, having picked up a stone and hurled it at the window, "there's the Jowler." It is thus, and thus only, that a man is seen at his best—or, for that matter, a woman at hers. In Robert Browning's great galaxy of women none is so vivid to me as Riccardi's bride, and never have I passed Palazzo Riccardi without wondering whether "The Statue and the Bust" would ever have been written had not Duke Ferdinand's first sight of that bride been framed in one of those windows, that window at which he was evermore content to see her, to leave her, day after day, as he rode by.

She, you will remember, when she was growing old, summoned to her presence Luca della Robbia and bade him mould a portrait of her at her habitual window, so that after her death she would still be there. And perhaps it was her example that in later times set the fashion of those *finte* which were until recent years so frequently to be seen on blank walls of Italian houses. These were not up to the standard of "Robbia's craft so apt and strange." They were indeed, if you will, rather vulgar. The average leaner-out was apt to be somewhat over-dressed in the complex mode of the eighteenth-seventies, over-frilled, over-jewelled; and her blond tresses (for, of course, to suit the wistful taste of the Italians, she was always a *biondina*) were rather over-blond. The curtains of her window were of a very bright red or blue, and there was likely to be a very yellow canary in a cage beside her. And hers was a vapid simper as she leaned forth with one elbow on the cushioned sill, and one index finger posed upon her cheek. There was much to be said against her; yet one misses her, now that she's gone. She had the charm of windowhood.

I have often wondered that (barring the artless makers of those *finte*) so few painters have used that charm, woven that spell. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, one of those few, might, with his constant striving after "intensity," have been expected to be a devotee of windows; but even he did but once avail himself of frame within frame. Once;

and of all his portraits of women, haunting as these are by reason of what he saw in them, or transfused into them, assuredly the most haunting is that of the head and shoulders of a cottage girl at a small lattice window, a girl in a smock, drawing back a chequered curtain, looking out into the morning, and (one guesses) taking in the scent of the flowers in a small front-garden unseen by us. Behind her, unseen too, is her room, with such little belongings in it as are hers; and, just because it isn't visible, that room is a far better setting than those elaborate environments of wondrous fabrics, of mediaeval bibelots and of exotic flowers in strange bowls or vases with which Rossetti, for the most part, endowed his models.

A great element in the charm of windows is that unless they are on the ground-floor and you flatten your nose against the panes you cannot see more than a very little, if anything at all, of what lies behind them. Your imagination has free play. Do you know those tiny little old half-length figures in waxwork at Hertford House?—those Spanish noblemen and noblewomen of the seventeenth century, each of them enshrined in a square box that is black outside and black inside and has one side made of glass to allow the inmate to look, sombrely, disdainfully out at us from what our fancy assures us is a great old august apartment in a worthy palace? I have often gazed at them, and never without an illusion of having been wafted back across three centuries into Madrid, or into Seville, and of seeing this and that great personage alive, haughtily in the flesh, at a great window. Henry James, roaming around the Boboli Gardens, some fifty years ago, paused and, gazing fixedly up at one of the windows of the vast stony palace, reflected that from *it* Medici after Medici had stood looking out. "And the Medici were great people," he mused, as he tells us in the essay that he presently wrote; and "the ache of the historic spirit" in him was poignant. He would have experienced no such ache in that room on the ground-floor of Hertford House in which I so often stood before the windows of those minim waxworks. His historic sense would have blest and feasted.

Playwrights, like painters, have been chary of windows. Shakespeare, like Rossetti, used only one, once only, so far as I remember. He seems not to have realised that words spoken from a window are thereby as much the more effective as the person seen thereat. Stage-struck young ladies, by some queer instinct, are aware of this fact; hence the desire of all of them to commence as Juliet: the window will conceal incompetence. My most vivid memory of Mrs. Patrick Campbell is framed in the window of *Mélanide*. And this memory reminds me that *Mélanide*'s was not the only window vouchsafed to us by Maurice Maeterlinck, and that of all his plays *Intérieur* was the most strangely moving and haunting. The foreground of the stage is a garden in the dusk of night. In the background there are



the windows of a lighted room, in which, clearly visible, are the father and mother and sisters of a girl whose drowned body, as we know from the hushed and broken talk of the men and women in the garden, is being brought from the river. The mother and father and sister will soon know what is known to us. The action of the piece lasts no more than half-an-hour. But at the end of it one seems to have suffered a very long period of pity and awe.

Let me pass on to another play, in itself less remarkable than *Intérieur*, but far more famous and more popular. Its author is nameless, its action is crudely barbarous, its dialogue is but shrill incoherent gibberish. Yet it has for all of us, whenever we come across it, a perennial fascination. How can we account for that? Easily enough. The whole drama is enacted in a window-frame, the frame of the one and only window in Punch's strange old portable house.

Politicians, please note. The gift of oratory has been conferred on few of you ; nor are many of you able to express yourselves fluently, accurately, and without grievous triteness. Think how much less restive your audiences would be if you spoke to them through a window ! My temperament was conservative even in my youth. My mind, moreover, was ossified years ago. I abominate all alterations. But for your sakes I do hope you will insist that St. Stephen's new Chamber shall have a small inner structure, simple or ornate, with a window through which all speeches shall be delivered. Let me also commend to you a similar device on the platforms of Town Halls. Even that baker's dozen of you who *can* speak with the tongue of men and angels, and can hold their constituents or their fellow-Members spellbound, would find their triumphs enhanced by my scheme. I suppose that the gréatest English orator in the nineteenth century was Mr. Gladstone ; and I take it to have been the peak of his achievements in the spoken word that on a bitterly cold afternoon, and on Blackheath Common, at the time of the Bulgarian Atrocities, he dominated and swayed for one hour and a half a gathering of not less than six thousand persons, most of whom had violently booed him at the outset of his speech. There, indeed, was a man who could dispense with windows. Yet, in later years, in the Midlothian phase of his career, he made frequent use of them. And I feel sure his gréatest effects were made in those successive railway stations where, to serried throngs, he spoke burning words from the window of a railway-carriage, on his way northward or southward. I can see that ivory face and that silvery hair ; and those dark flashing eyes looking forth. Would that I had been there to hear the organ-music of the voice !

Gladstone's great rival and antithesis was no man for mobs, and excelled only in the Chamber. But he did have one great success

in presence of a multitude. I refer to the one and only occasion on which he spoke from a window. I wish I had been old enough to be in the crowd down to which, from a frame on the first floor of 10 Downing Street, he made his pronouncement about Peace with Honour. I should like also, of course, to have heard him in parliamentary debate. I was once told by an old gentleman who had sat on the back benches, as a Conservative member, when Mr. Disraeli was Leader of the House, that sphinx-like though the face was to all beholders the great debater's back was very expressive—the movements of the shoulders, of the elbows and the hips vividly illustrating his words. But even in repose a back, if it be of the right kind, can be eloquent—such a back as Goethe's, for example. Do you know that sketch which Johann Tischbein made in one of the bedrooms of a Roman inn, while Goethe was leaning out of the window and looking down to the street below? It is a graceful, a forceful, and a noble back that we see there in that bedroom. Had Napoleon been there to see it, he would have murmured, as you know he did when he saw Goethe face to face at Weimar in later years, "*Voilà un homme!*" It is moreover the back of a man rapt in contemplation, rapt in the joy of being, at last, in the city of his dreams; a man avidly observing, learning, storing up. He is wearing slippers, he has not yet put on his waistcoat nor buttoned his breeches at the knees. His toilet can wait. His passionate curiosity cannot. It is as intimate, as significant a portrait as ever was made of one man by another.

I like to think that it may have been made on Goethe's very first morning in Rome, and that he had arrived overnight. In visiting a city that you have never yet seen it is well to arrive at night, for sake of the peculiar excitement of next morning's awakening to it—the queer deep thrill of your prospection into whatever street or square underlies your window, presaging all else that will be seen later. A square is preferable to a street; a populous old spacious square, set with statues and animated by fountains; somewhere in Italy, for choice. Such a square is a good starting-point for your future roving; and to it from them you will always return with a feeling of affection, and will spend much time at that window of yours, fondly. But I beg your pardon for dogmatizing about you. When I said *you*, I meant *I*. You perhaps are an ardent sight-seer, a scrupulous examiner of aisles and sacristies and side-chapels, an indefatigable turner-in at turnstiles of museums and picture-galleries and the like. I'm an *alfrescoist*. The life of the city, and the architectural background against which that life is lived, suffice my soul while I rove around, or merely lean forth from the window that is, for the time being, mine. Merely? I take back that word. One is more observant from one's coign of vantage up there, and all that

is to be seen stands out more clearly, and one's mind is more sensitive, than when one pads the hoof down there.

"The last time I saw Paris"—otherwise than from the ceinture railway—abides with me more vividly and delightfully than any of the previous times. Yet I saw but one aspect of the city's life. You know the huge grey façade of the Gare du Nord, and may have noted that it is adorned (or at any rate weighted) with rows of proportionately huge statues, one on each side of every window, symbolising the Continents, and the principal French provinces and cities, and Liberty, I think, and Justice, and many other things of national or universal import. But you may not be aware that all the windows on the first floor are those of an hotel, an hotel that occupies this one floor only, and consists of twelve vast bedrooms (each with a small anteroom and a bath-room), and nothing else. Behind the bedrooms runs a corridor whose opposite side has windows through which you see, far down, the many platforms of the station and the steam of arriving and departing trains. These windows are of thick double glass. The corridor is a quiet one. Little locomotives are seen and not heard. But the bedrooms are the great point. They seem to have been built for giants and giantesses, so vast are their ancient wardrobes, dressing-tables, and beds; and each of their two windows is in proportion to the stone figure that stands on either side of it, planting a colossal foot upon the sill. If I remember rightly, it was from between the ankle of a masculine Africa and of a feminine Marseilles that I looked forth early on my first morning, and saw a torrent of innumerable young human backs, flooding across the square beneath and along the straight wide Rue Lafayette beyond. The fulness and swiftness of it made me gasp—and kept me gasping, while in the station behind me, incessantly, for more than an hour and a half, trainload after trainload of young men and women from the banlieue was disgorged into the capital. The maidens outnumbered the youths by about three or four to one, it seemed to me; and yet they were one maiden, so identically alike were they in their cloche hats and knee-deep skirts and flesh-coloured stockings, and in virtue of that erectly tripping gait which Paris teaches while London inculcates an unsteady slouch. One maiden, yet hundreds and thousands of maidens, each with a soul of her own, and a home of her own, and earning her own wages. Bewildering! Having seen that sight, I needed no other. During the three or four days of my sojourn I didn't bother to go anywhere, except for meals in a little restaurant hard by, famous for its oysters and its bouillabaisse. I spent my time in reading newspapers and books, and in looking forward to the early morrow's renewal of the incalculable torrent.

From some windows one can gaze and be rapt at any hour of

the day, even though no human being is to be seen from them. From any window, for instance, that looks out on to the sea. For many years I lived in a little house that looks down to what a great poet, reared beside Northumbrian breakers, rudely called "the tideless dolorous midland sea." It has a tide really (though not perhaps a very great one), and its aspect is constantly changing, and I was never tired of watching it and its moods. I remember, too, with affection, the little bedroom in an old farm-house at Pagham, where I abode for some weeks of the autumn after the last war. There were a few stairs up to the bedroom, but the window was so placed that its sill was no more than five feet or so above the level of the ground. Outside there was nothing to be seen but a large field of ripening barley. The sea was quite near, but invisible. One was all alone with the barley, which grew in a friendly eager manner right up against the wall of the farm-house, inviting one to lean down and touch its ears.

Let not such memories imply any disparagement of quite ordinary windows—street windows, with recurrent glimpses of neighbours opposite. I am glad that from the windows of my nursery in a Victorian cul-de-sac I knew by sight various other children, and their nurses, and their parents. I had no great desire to know them outside their frames. I think I had a shrewd suspicion that they were not really so interesting and so exciting as my fancy made them. In my adolescence no neighbours were to be seen. Nevertheless, I was fond of my bedroom window, from which I could gaze in a moralising manner over the multitude of tombstones in what had been throughout the eighteenth century the burial-ground of St. George's, Hanover Square; and I was still fonder of my sitting-room window, from which I could watch, year after year, the budding of the leaves in Hyde Park, and their prime, and their decline and fall. Trees are of course the best thing Nature has to show us; and in London one values them far more than one does elsewhere. I missed them sorely when, in later years, I lived in a street again. The faces at the windows over the way were unchanging, were unaffected by the sequence of the seasons. Also, alas, my talent for weaving fancies was not what it once had been. Still, I was a frequent looker-forth—especially on Thursdays. I had become a professional writer. I wrote a weekly article for the *Saturday Review*; and Thursday was the day on which I did it; and the doing was never so easy as I sometimes hoped it might be: I had never, poor wretch, acquired one scrap of professional facility. I often doubted whether I had in my mind enough to fill the two columns that were expected of me. I sometimes found that I had got ahead of my argument, or even that I was flatly contradicting something that I had said at the outset, or that my meaning was obscure even to

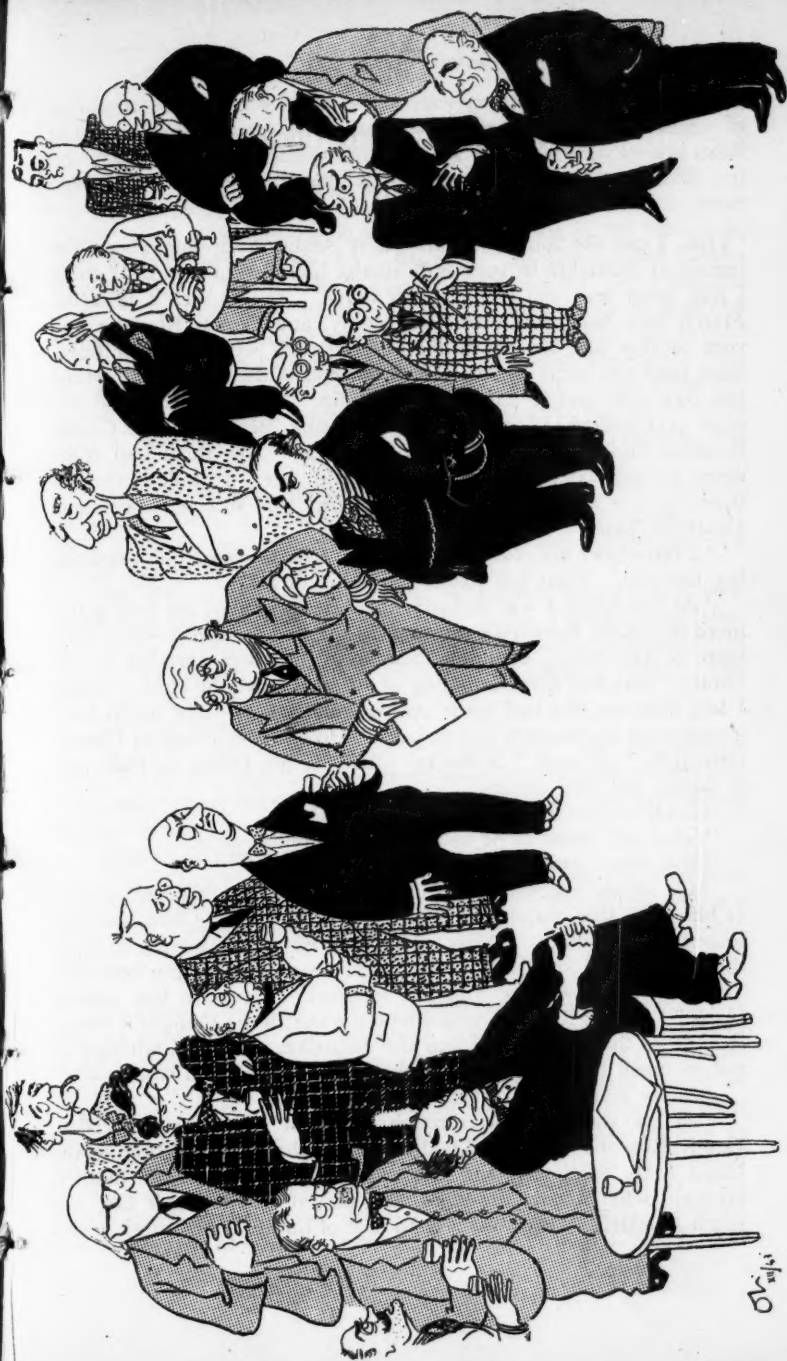
myself. At such crises I would rise from my desk and take, as it were, refuge at the window, with brows knitted, and chin tightly clasped between finger and thumb. I would envy the hansom cabmen as they flashed by below me. I would envy some old lady leading a dog on a leash. I would envy her dog.

"And if it was thus, thus in the prime of me," need I say that the composition of what you have just been reading or skipping was not done without much recourse to a window?

# APOTHEOSIS

A NOTE by OSBERT LANCASTER

SIR MAX BEERBOHM, one fancies, was not himself present on that memorable occasion when Mr. Browning took tea with the Browning Society ; nor does it seem probable that Raphael actually witnessed St. Paul preaching to the Athenians or that Benjamin Robert Haydon was ever privileged to behold the Duke of Wellington on the field of Waterloo. The paintings, therefore, in which the artists have so skilfully depicted these memorable scenes, are, strictly speaking, works of the Creative Imagination. I, unfortunately (albeit in this one respect only), was present when the Maximilian Society celebrated the 70th birthday of their patron, so am unable to allow my fancy free play and, unlike Sir Max, Raphael and B. R. Haydon, have been forced to subject myself to the imperious demands of Historic Truth. The drawing on the opposite page must, therefore, be judged not in the same way as the above-mentioned masterpieces but rather as one determines the merits of a topographical landscape or such a work as Frith's Paddington Station. And, alas, it is by just such standards that it must, I fear, be accounted a failure. Many of those who were in fact present I have omitted to portray ; either my memory has failed me or else the classic regularity of their features has proved beyond my powers to set down. Others, whom I have attempted to depict, may well prove unrecognisable to themselves and their friends, though not perhaps, one hopes, in every case, to their enemies. It is this consciousness of failure which has led me to abandon the idea which in my self-confident pride I once entertained of furnishing one of those fascinating numbered diagrams in outline (frequently of rather greater artistic merit than the pictures themselves) with which old-fashioned steel-engravings of the Congress of Vienna or the Opening of the Great Exhibition are invariably provided and which any pictorial record of an event of this importance would seem imperiously to demand. However, if the reader is thus denied the assurance of certainty he may still enjoy the pleasures of speculation. And who would be so bold as to maintain, in the face of both philosophic and proverbial evidence to the contrary, that his pleasure is thereby sensibly diminished ?



APOTHEOSIS.



## THE INHERITED CLOCK

BY ELIZABETH BOWEN

'YES, I can see you now,' said Aunt Addie, 'skipping about the terrace at Sandyhill in your little scarlet highwayman coat. I think I had never seen you in such high spirits. It was such a beautiful March day, hazy, but warm and sunny, and Cousin Rosanna and your mother and I were in the wintergarden with the door open. Each time you came dancing down our end of the terrace you would toss your curls and go dancing away again. Your mother feared you were over-excited; I said, "It's the spring, perhaps," but Cousin Rosanna said, "Not at all: it's the clock." We three had come down for the day; Paul was staying with her. I don't remember where *he* was at the time—I'm afraid probably sulking, somewhere about the place.'

'I remember my coat,' said her niece Clara, 'but I don't remember the day. What has made you think of it?'

'As you know, I was at Sandyhill yesterday: they are taking two more of Cousin Rosanna's servants, so she has decided to close some more of the house, including that little anteroom through to the library. She had been hesitating whether to move the clock: before I left, after tea, she had made up her mind not to—that might have meant some unnecessary jolt or jar. "How it is to travel to Clara's, ultimately," she said, "is not my affair. I am taking no risks with it during my own lifetime."'

Clara, surprised, said: 'Travel to me?'

'That will have to be thought of, of course, dear.'

'But what clock are you talking about?'

Miss Detter began to say something, tripped up, glanced askance at her niece then turned an unhappy red, as though Clara had said something irreligious. 'Why, yours—the one she is leaving to you,' she said. 'You know she refers to that constantly, in your presence. That skeleton clock that you like so much. How can you look so blank? Cousin Rosanna would be quite hurt if she thought it meant as little as that to you. It was the discussion yesterday, whether or not to move it, that brought back that day when you wore—'

'—My scarlet coat. Yes, but why?'

'As we watched you through the door of the wintergarden, Cousin Rosanna turned and said to your mother, "I have been telling Clara that, ultimately, she is to have the clock." Your mother, knowing what a part the clock had played in Rosanna's life, was much touched. There was a good deal of bustle, I remember, about

getting us off to the train, it being discovered, just before we started, that you had hurt the poor little forefinger of your right hand. It was really rather a shocking sight : black and blue with several small ugly cuts. You were loyally mum about what had happened, but we all suspected that Master Paul had been up to some more cruel tricks. This, naturally, made you a little nervous in the train. So your mother, hoping to cheer you up, said, "So, Clara, when Cousin Rosanna goes to Heaven she is going to send you her lovely skeleton clock?" I don't know whether it was the idea of Cousin Rosanna going away to Heaven, or whether the word "skeleton" frightened you, but you burst into tears and became almost hysterical. Not liking to see you cry in a railway carriage, I said, "You know the reason Cousin Rosanna loves it? It has not stopped ticking for more than a hundred years!" But that only seemed to unsettle you still more.'

'Well, if you say this happened, Aunt Addie, of course it did,' Clara said—with a somehow engaged and rebellious feeling. 'I know I was six the winter I had that coat : I am thirty now—one cannot expect to remember everything.'

'Yes, I remember you before you remember yourself,' said Aunt Addie, looking at her affectionately. 'Of course, I have always taken an interest in you—but then, you have always taken an interest in yourself. I don't mean that unkindly : why shouldn't you? You have an exceptional character.'

'Only to you, I think.'

'At least,' Aunt Addie said, in a brisker tone, 'you will make a point, won't you, next time you're at Sandyhill, of saying something enthusiastic about the clock? Let her see how much you are looking forward to it.'

'Might not that seem——?'

'Why, Clara? You know Cousin Rosanna likes you and Paul to be perfectly natural about the money, and if about money why not about the clock, when she so much connects it with you in her own mind?'

There was, it was true, a singular lack of nonsense about Rosanna Detter's relations with her two young heirs. She had named them as such early on in their infancy, made a point of having them frequently at her house, and insisted that their expectations should be discussed and defined. The contents of her will had long ago been made known, and she proposed, she said, in ordinary fairness to make no changes in it without warning. Apart from bequests to charities, legacies to old servants and £5,000 for Addie Detter (who had declared fervently this was much too much) Rosanna's fortune was to be divided equally between Paul Ardeen and Clara Detter,

respectively son and daughter of two of her first cousins, and, thus, second cousins to one another. Clara lived, as a child, with her widowed mother in a small house in Ealing; Paul with his not prosperous doctor father on the outskirts of an industrial town—the two young people's surroundings, as well as their temperaments, could not fail to attach them to their auspicious future. Meanwhile, Cousin Rosanna made them no allowances and few presents—though there were times when the watchful Clara suspected that Rosanna paid the more pressing of Paul's debts.

It gratified Cousin Rosanna, herself an only child, to watch these two high-spirited only children quarrel. Their co-heirship had not created a happy tie. Dark bullet-headed Paul, at once cool and bragging, and blonde fine-strung Clara, with her fairylike affectations, seldom relaxed, during visits to Sandyhill, their resourceful campaign against one another. Cousin Rosanna, in packing them off to play (for she could tolerate neither for very long at a time) could assure herself that they were equally tough. The children worked on each other like two indestructible pieces of sandpaper. It might have been thought that Rosanna, in selecting heirs near in age and of opposite sexes, entertained some romantic spinsterish project that they should marry, and that their declared hostility pleased her as being, admittedly, the first phase of love. This cannot have been so, for Paul's marriage, at twenty-two, was, by all showing, not adversely seen. It was Clara, surprisingly, who was piqued. She perceived, if Rosanna chose to ignore, a touch of Paul's usual insolence in his choice. The fortunate Edmée—blonde like Clara, but of how different a type—was to be recognised, at the first glance, as being just one more in the succession of fancies with whom Paul by habit went round town: nor did she show any reason why she should be the last. Summoned for the occasion to Sandyhill, Clara stood by at the presentation of the heavy-lidded bride. She was able to watch Paul fold, with expressionless satisfaction, preparatory to slipping into his wallet, Rosanna's five-hundred-pound cheque for the honeymoon.

It had been two years later, when she was twenty-one, that Clara met her fate in the person of Henry Harley; who, already a married man, was forced to tell her that he saw little prospect of changing his way of life. He was not well off; his wife had been irreproachable; the payment of alimony would cripple him, and he was not disposed to let scandal prejudice his career. She chose to continue obstinate in her feeling, and in her hopes of things taking a better turn. Her poverty, to which one dared set no term, meanwhile made everything more difficult: the circumstances under which their affair was conducted constantly alarmed Henry and oppressed her. This had now gone on for nine years, and provided the reason why Clara at thirty was unmarried. As the years went by, she became increasingly

grateful to Cousin Rosanna for either her resolute ignorance or her tolerance, and she had reproached herself, before the war started, for not going down more often to Sandyhill. Since the war, she was tied to exacting work ; also, the closing of that coastal area interdicted visits from London—except, of course, on the plea of family business that could from time to time be produced. Cousin Rosanna's influence in her neighbourhood was more considerable than one ought, these days, to admit. The officially dangerous position of Sandyhill disqualified the house as a hospital or a repository for children ; but also, so far no soldiers had been billeted there. And she had kept intact, until very lately, her staff of middle-aged servants.

Sandyhill itself was to go to Paul, who did not conceal his intention of selling it. It might do well, he expected, for a private asylum, when peace should bring back happier days. The house *had*, it is true, already in some ways the look of an institution, though of an expensive kind : it stood among pleasure-grounds dark with ilex, girt by a high flint wall. The avenue ran downhill between ramparts of evergreen, to debouch into the main street of an unassuming seaside resort. Sandyhill had been built by Rosanna's great-uncle, from whom (fairly late in her own life) she had inherited it, with substantial wealth : cleverly sheltered by trees from the sea winds, it faced south and enjoyed a good deal of sunshine. From the terrace, from the adjoining wintergarden and from the plate-glass windows upstairs and down you also enjoyed, if this were your pleasure, a view of the Channel above the ilex groves. Indoors, the rooms were powerfully heated, brocade-papered, and so planned that you looked through an enfilade of pine-framed doorways. They composed a museum of discredited *objets d'art* which, up to now, had been always specklessly kept.

In one of the hollows about the grounds had been placed a small lake, sunless most of the day and overlooked by a kiosk. Into this lake had dropped, since Clara's last visit, what had so far been Sandyhill's only bomb : the blast had wrenched the shutters off the kiosk, and, by a freak of travel, obliterated the glass wintergarden projecting west of the house. . . . This day of Clara's return, not long after the conversation with Aunt Addie, was an almost eery extension of her aunt's memory : it was in March, 'hazy, but warm and sunny.' Clara and Cousin Rosanna lunched in the morningroom. 'As Addie no doubt will have told you, they've taken Preeps and Marchant, so I have closed the diningroom and the library.' Nodding towards a door on her left hand, Cousin Rosanna added : 'Therefore the house stops there.'

'May I look, later?'

Cousin Rosanna stared. 'By all means, if you are interested in dust-sheets.' Her eyes, always prominent, were today more so :

about her face and her manner appeared the something you less at the time observe than afterwards recollect—*then*, you say you saw the beginning of the end. At seventy-five, the big woman was to be felt contracting, withdrawing from life with the same heavy indifference with which she withdrew her life from room to room. Clara did notice that her dictatorial ‘ultimatels’ were fewer. Though lunch was served with most of its old formality the dried-egg omelette was rubbery : the contempt with which Cousin Rosanna ate it had been, more, a contempt for her own palate, that with impunity one could now insult.

She now, by abruptly turning her chair to the fire, implied she had left the table : her guest could do as she liked. Clara, accordingly, rose and went frankly straight to the door where the house had been forced by war to stop. This led to the anteroom which, in its turn, led to the library. At once, she could hear a clock expectantly ticking. The anteroom french-window was shuttered up : only cracks of light from the terrace fell on the shrouded sofa and on the sheet tucked bibwise over the bookcase on which the clock stood. The gleam of the glass of the dome inside which the ticking proceeded was just, but only just, to be seen.

‘What are you up to in there?’ called out Cousin Rosanna. ‘Looking at your clock?’

‘I can’t see it, yet.’

‘Well, you ought to know what it looks like, goodness knows!’

Clara did not reply. Her cousin, restless, repeated : ‘What are you doing *now*?’

‘Opening a shutter—may I?’

‘If you shut it again. You haven’t got Preeps and Marchant to dance round clearing up after you now, you know.’

The skeleton clock, in daylight, was threatening to a degree its oddness could not explain. Looking through the glass at its wheels, cogs, springs and tensions, and at its upraised striker, awaiting with a sensible quiver the finish of the hour that was in force, Clara tried to tell herself that it was, only, shocking to see the anatomy of time. The clock was without a face, its twelve numerals being welded on to a just visible wire ring. As she watched, the minute hand against its background of nothing made one, then another, spectral advance. This was enough : if she did not yet feel she could anticipate feeling her sanity being demolished, by one degree more, as every sixtieth second brought round this unheard click. Retreating, she looked round the walls of the anteroom : she saw the dark-patterned oblongs where the pictures had hung. She could remember which picture used to hang in each oblong ; she remembered the names of the books in the bookcase under the sheet.

But as far as she knew she had not seen the clock before.

'None the worse, you see,' vouchsafed Cousin Rosanna, as Clara returned to the morningroom.

'You mean,' Clara said with an effort, 'the same as ever?'

'No, I don't; I mean none the worse for the bomb. As it stood up to that, it should see you out, we may hope. So you can take it for granted, as I have done, instead of rushing to look for it every time you come here.' Cousin Rosanna, however, did not seem wholly displeased.

'Do I really?' said Clara, trying to smile this off.

'Unless you walk in your sleep, and sleep in daytime, in which case you had better go to the doctor.—Have you seen the winter-garden?'

'Not yet; I——'

'It isn't there.—By the way, you will have to see that that clock's attended to. I have had the same man, out from Southstone, to wind it for twenty-four years: he took on when that previous poor fellow—shocking affair that was!—And another thing: keep a careful eye on Paul, or he'll get his hands on it before you can say knife. However, you don't need me to tell you *that*!'

'No, no of course not, Cousin Rosanna . . . He wants it so much?' Clara added, as though musingly.

'For the reason we know too well,' said Rosanna, with a protuberant meaning stare. 'You know really, Clara, in view of all, you ought not to begrudge Paul that one bit of fun. Dear me, a cat would have laughed, and I must say I did. I can see you now——'

'—I was wearing my scarlet coat?'

'Scarlet? Good heavens, no; at least I should hope not: you were fat to be wearing scarlet at fourteen. Not that, with you standing there with that glass thing over your head, one looked twice at whatever else you had on. However—"Now then, Paul," I said, "that's enough. She can't breathe in there: take it off her!"—However,' concluded Cousin Rosanna, who for the first time today showed genuine pleasure, 'easier said than done.' Her mood changed; she looked at Clara with moody boredom. 'Did you say you wanted to go for a turn?' she said. 'Because if that's what you want you had better go.'

Clara was fat no longer: that growing phase had been brief. Today her step on the terrace, if more assertive, was not much heavier than it had been as a child's. Her height and her feverish fair good looks were set off by clothes that showed an expensive taste—taste that she could not fully indulge, yet. She glanced, without shock as without feeling, at the site of the wintergarden—here some exotic creepers had already perished against the exposed wall. Then she slanted downwards across the lawn, into one of the paths that entered the woods of ilex. Those sombre pleasure-grounds, unchanging as might



have been a photograph of themselves, were charged for her with a past that, though discontinuous, maintained a continuous atmosphere of its own. To these she had sometimes escaped; they had equally been the scene of those unescapable games with Paul. She could have thought she heard what war had suspended—stiff dead leaves being brushed from hard paths with stiff brooms. To each cut-out of a branch against the diluted sky attached some calculation or fear or unhopeful triumph. Every glade, every seat, every vista at the turn of a path only drew out the story. To be coming, for instance, into view of the lake, and of the kiosk reflected in its apathetic water, was to breathe the original horror of Paul's telling her that 'they' kept the headless ladies locked up in there. He had looked in, he told her, between the slats of the shutters, but could not advise her to do the same. Now, with the shutters gone, she saw mildewed inside walls: as she stared at the kiosk, like someone performing an exercise, even lungfuls of horror seemed salutary. No, there was nothing, no single thing, in the history of Clara at Sandyhill that she could not remember.—Yet, was there?

With regard to no place other than Sandyhill could this opening and splitting wider of a crevasse in her memory have alarmed her more. At its deepness she dared not attempt to guess; its extent, if it ever did stop, must simply wait to be seen.

That, as things turned out, was to be Clara's last visit to Sandyhill, except for the day of Cousin Rosanna's funeral. Neither Clara nor Paul received any deathbed summons: their cousin's loss of interest must have been so entire that she could not be bothered putting them through that last hoop. The funeral was correct but for one detail—Paul failed to be there. Stationed far up North, he had (his telegram told them) missed the necessary train. Clara returned to London that same evening, leaving Aunt Addie at Sandyhill to console the servants and to receive Paul whenever he should arrive. A week later, fairly late in the evening, Aunt Addie came staggering into Clara's St. John's Wood flat with the clock embraced inside her exhausted arms. It was not packed—in a packingcase it might have got knocked about, in which case it might have stopped. As it was, it had gone on ticking, and had struck twice in the train, to the interest of everyone, and once again in the lift, coming up here to Clara's flat.

'I took the precaution of travelling first class,' Aunt Addie said. 'I knew you would want to have it as soon as possible. Look, I am putting it *here*, for the time being'—(that meant, the only table the size of the room allowed)—'but when I get my breath back, we'll put it where you intend. You must often have seen it here, in your mind's eye.—Not, I hope, on anything it could fall off?'

'In that case, I can only think of the floor.'



'Oh,' said Aunt Addie, preoccupied, 'I seem to have left fingerprints on the dome.' She breathed on the glass and began to polish them off. 'Naturally, you have had a good deal to think about. In fact, I should not be surprised if this changed the course of your life.'

'A clock—how could it?' said Clara wildly.

'No, I was referring to Cousin Rosanna's death, dear. I could already see some little changes in Paul.'

'—By the way, did Paul say anything when you took the clock?'

'Er, no,' said Aunt Addie, colouring faintly. 'He was not about, as it happened; he was so busy.'

Clara's life, ever since she had been told of the will (which was practically as far back as she could remember) had, of course, hinged on the prospect of this immense change. Not unreasonably, she expected everything to go better. She perceived that her nature was of the kind that is only able to flower in clement air: either wealth or reciprocal love, ideally both, were necessary. To begin with, she intended to buy herself surroundings that suited her, that would set her off. But chiefly, as her obsessive love for Henry became, in the course of the nine years, the centre of everything, she had quite simply looked to her coming money for the one consummation of this, marriage. The humiliating uncertainties of their relationship, and, still more, the thought of him living there with his wife, were more of a torment than she had dared to allow. Humble about herself with regard to him, and humbly bare of illusions regarding Henry, she believed that her, Clara's, coming into her money would be the one thing needed to make him break with his wife. Should his career show damage from the divorce proceedings, he could afford to abandon it: she could compensate him. She could buy open some other door for his ambition. As for love—so far Henry had only loved her, as you might say, on trust. She had yet to gain him wholly by showing what she could, in the whole, be. Now she could feel the current of her nature stirring strongly under the thinning ice. Had it been the strength of the current that thinned the ice? Or had the ice had to be thinned by the breath of financial summer before the current, however strong, could be felt?

When Aunt Addie had gone, Clara tried again to realise all that was now, since last week, within her reach. She went across to the mirror and stood and stared at herself imperiously. But the current, without warning, ceased to be felt: no kind of exultation was possible. The newly-arrived clock, chopping off each second to fall and perish, recalled how many seconds had gone to make up her years, how many of these had been either null or bitter, how many had been void before the void claimed them. She had been subject to waiting as to an illness; the tissues of her being had been consumed by it.

Was it impossible that the past should be able to injure the future irreparably? Turning away from the mirror, she made herself face the clock; she looked through into the nothing behind its hands. Turning away from the clock, she went to the telephone.

Henry's reply, at the same time cautious and social, warned her that, as so often at this hour, he was not alone.—All the same: 'What do you think? My clock has arrived,' she said. 'Aunt Addie has just brought it, from Sandyhill.'

'Indeed. Which is that?'

'Which clock? Surely you know, Henry. The one I must have so often told you about. . . . Didn't I? Well, it's with me now, in this room. Can you hear it ticking?'

'No, I'm afraid not.'

She got up, pulling the telephone with her as far as the cord would go, then stretched the receiver at arm's length towards the glass dome. After some seconds she went on: 'You heard it *that* time? I like to think we are hearing the same thing. They say it has never stopped for more than a hundred years: don't you think it sounds like that? Cousin Rosanna insisted *I* was to have this clock.'

'Thrown in,' Henry said, 'with the pound of tea.' But his voice, besides being ironical, was distraught: all the time, he was thinking up some story that could account for his end of the conversation, and was being careful to make, in his wife's hearing, no remark that would not fit in with that.

'Yes,' said Clara, quivering, 'with, with my pound of tea. Do you think that could mean she did really care for me? I wish I could think so. There is something frightening about the death of someone who always kept one so near her, without love. Still, there it is: she's dead. And because of that—Henry, tell me again that you're glad?'

'Of course.'

'For both our sakes—yours and mine?'

'Of course . . . Well, this has been nice, but I fear I must say goodnight. We were thinking of listening to the European news.'

'Stop, wait, don't go for a minute! I can't bear this clock! I dread it; I can't stay with it in the room! What am I to do this evening? Where can I go?'

'I'm afraid I can't think, really.'

'There's no *possible* chance you——?'

'No; I'm afraid not.'

'But you do love me?'

'Of course.'

So Clara, to stop herself thinking, rang up two or three friends, but not one of them answered: their telephones went on ringing. Therefore she put on her overcoat, found her torch, dropped down

in the lift and went for a walk in the black-out. It was late enough for the streets to be almost empty. Clara, walking at high speed into the solid darkness, was surprised all over her body to feel no impact: she seemed to pass like a ghost through an endless wall. No segment of moon peered at her, no stars guided. Brought to a halt for breath, she began to spy with her torch at the things round her—a post-box, a corner with no railing, the white plate of a street-name. Nothing told her anything, except one thing—unless she had lost her memory, she had lost her way. She dived into a wardens' post to ask where this was, or where she was, and in the glare in there they all stared at her. 'Where did you want to get back to?' someone said, and for either a second or an eternity she fancied she might be unable to tell him . . . When Clara once again found herself at the portico of the block of flats where she lived, tomorrow had begun to curdle the sky. Having hesitated with her key in her own door, she let herself in and went quickly through to her bedroom. But the wall between herself and the clock was thin. Getting up, lying down, getting up, she continued, until her telephone called her, her search for the ear-plugs that Aunt Addie had given her when first the raids began.

When Aunt Addie rang up, two mornings later, it was to announce that, after a search of London, she *had* succeeded in finding an old man to wind the clock. 'I knew you'd be anxious; I know I was! Providentially, however, I am in time.'

'In time for what?'

'For the day it is always wound. So you will know when to expect the man,' said Aunt Addie.

Therefore Clara, who started for work at cock-crow, not to return till sometime on in the evening, told the porter to admit, on whichever day he should come, an old man to wind the clock in her flat. The day must have been Friday, for that evening she came home to find a door ajar. There was somebody, besides the clock, in possession—this turned out to be Paul. Having arranged the black-out and turned the lights on, he was comfortably sitting on her sofa, smoking one of his superior cigarettes. He was, of course, in khaki. 'Really, what hours you keep!' he said. 'However, I've had my dinner. I trust you have?' At this point, as though recollecting himself, Paul sprang up and smote Clara matily on the shoulder. He then stood back to inspect her. 'Radiant—and can one wonder?' he added. 'By the way, I was sorry to miss you the other day. I hope I wasn't missed?'

'At the funeral? Everyone thought that looked pretty queer, and Cousin Rosanna, of course, would have been furious.'

'If so, most unfairly. I missed my train that morning because I had made a night of it, and I made a night of it because I felt like

hell. You might not think so, and I was surprised myself. After all, she had never wanted anything.'

'Never wanted us to love her?'

'Well, if you put it that way—never gave us a chance. However, I snapped out of that. I feel fine now.'

'How nice . . . How is Edmée?'

'I thought her looking wonderfully herself. And how is Henry? As nice as ever?'

Clara said frigidly: 'How did you get in?'

'A civil old burglar, or somebody, let me in. He said nothing to me, so I said nothing to him. He put the glass back on the clock and went away quietly, so I decided to wait.'

Paul, whose way of standing about was characteristic, did not seem disposed to sit down again. Having flicked ash into a shell not meant for an ashtray, he remained with his back to the mantelpiece, fixing on nothing particular his tolerant, narrow-eyed, level look. His uniform fitted and suited him just a degree too well, and gave him the air of being on excellent terms with war. He had thickened slightly: otherwise, little change appeared in the dark bullet-head, rather Mongolian features and compact, tactile hands that had made him by turns agreeably disagreeable and disagreeably agreeable as a little boy. 'Tick-tock, tick-tock,' he said, out of the blue. 'Sounds louder than ever, in here; though as nice as ever, of course. You don't think it's a little large for the room?'

'I shall be moving soon, I expect,' said Clara, who had not only sat down but put her feet up on her sofa, to show that Paul's presence affected her in no sort of way.

'Oh, shall you really? How right.' Paul glanced down at the toe of one shoe, lifted his eyebrows and went on: 'This isn't, of course, a point I should ever bother to raise, but you do of course realise that nothing should have left Sandyhill until the valuation had been made for probate?'

'I don't suppose Aunt Addie understood that. You could always have stopped her!'

'On the contrary: the devoted creature nipped off to the train with the clock while my back was turned. When I thought of your face at this end, I must say I had to smile.'

'Really,' said Clara touchily, 'why?'

Paul not only looked at his cousin but, somehow, gave the impression that only indolence kept him from looking harder. 'It is just as well, as we both see now,' he observed, 'that the point of that joke is known only to you and me. That you have never enjoyed it seems unfair. Still, I suppose it is partly in view of that that I've come round this evening to do the handsome thing—'

'Yes, I wondered what you had come about.'

'I make you an offer, Clara. I'll buy you out of the clock. Cash down—as soon as I touch the cash.'

Clara, not so much as raising her eyes from her rather too delicate ringless hands, said: 'Cousin Rosanna warned me this might happen.'

'What you mean—and how stupid of me, and how right you are—is that cash is no longer an object with you, either? Look, I'll go one better: I'll take the clock away for nothing. And better still, I'll take it away tonight.'

Clara went rigid immediately: her cheeks flamed and her voice shot into the particular note for so long familiar to her and Paul. 'Why should you take it simply because you want it?'

'Why should you keep it when you don't want it, simply because I do?' Even Paul's imperturbability showed, as of old, a crack. 'Well, we both know why—and better leave it at that. All the same, Clara, have some sense. It's one thing to cut your nose off to spite my face. But is it really worth going crackers?'

'Crackers—what do you mean?'

'Well, look at yourself in the glass.'

The mirror being exactly opposite the sofa, Clara had looked before she could stop herself. As quickly, she said: 'I don't see anything wrong. And didn't you say I was looking radiant?'

'Because, frankly, my one thought was, "We must keep her calm."' Paul, having ground out his cigarette with an air at once resigned and concerned, came to sit down on the sofa beside Clara. He pushed her feet off gently to make room for himself. Leaning a little towards her, he placed one hand, like a hostage, or like an invitation to read his entire motive, palm upwards on the brocade between them. His nearness enveloped Clara in a sense of complicity, frightening because it was acutely familiar, more frightening because she could not guess at its source. While his eyes expressed no more than good-natured fondness, and his manner regretful conciliation, both conveyed a threat for which no memory could account. 'I hate,' he said, 'to see you all shot up. Doesn't Henry?'

'Why should he? I haven't asked him.'

Her cousin, at once quickly and darkly, said: 'Possibly better not. I'm all, if we can, for keeping this in the family.'

'The clock?'

'No, I mean its effect on you. When you think it's only three days since Aunt Addie imported it.—And to think how well she meant, the old dear!'

Rearing up among the cushions at her end of the sofa, Clara exclaimed: 'You think that will work? Cousin Rosanna intended the clock for me. So this is just one thing you must do without. I would sooner drop it out of the window . . .'

'I am sure you would,' said Paul. 'In fact, I expect you've tried?'

He was right. Once in the small hours of a sleepless night, once on the occasion of an unnerving return home, that solution had already offered itself. Clara had turned the lights out, opened her eighth-floor window, found her way to the clock by the noise it made in the dark and gone so far as to balance it on the window-sill. In her finger-tips, as they supported it, could be felt its confident vibration—through the dome, through the stand projecting some inches into the night. She had awaited in vain some infinitesimal check, some involuntary metallic shudder with which the clock should anticipate its last second, the first it would not consume for a hundred years. Annihilation waited—the concrete roadway under the block of flats. By the concrete roadway the clock would be struck, not to strike again. Towards the dawn of the coming unthreatened day, some early goer to work would halt, step back and bend his torch on the cogs, uncoiled springs and incomprehensible splinters that had startled him by crunching under his boot.—But, suppose not. Suppose gravity failed? Or suppose the tick stayed up here without the clock, or the nothing that had shown through its skeleton form continued to bear its skeleton shadow? If what she purposed to do could be done, how was it it had never been done before? . . . Clara, quailing, hoped that she only did so before the conventionality of her own nature. She was not the woman, it seemed (if there were indeed such a woman) who could drop a clock from the window of a St. John's Wood flat. The chance of somebody passing at the decisive second, the immediate alarm to be raised by what would sound like a bomb, the likelihood of the affair being traced to her, the attention already drawn to the clock by its sentimental arrival with Aunt Addie and her own talk about it with the flats porter—all these Clara, too gladly, let weigh with her. She reprieved not so much the clock as her own will. She had returned the clock to its place on the table—twice.

'However,' Paul said, 'if that's how you feel . . . I let you see that I want it—apparently, that's enough.' He shrugged his shoulders, and slowly withdrew his hand: the interlude of frankness could be taken as over. Getting up, he strolled across to the clock, and, taking up his stand between it and Clara, could be felt to hold communication with it. Intently stooping, he squinted into its works. 'Yes,' he said remotely, 'I am stuck on this clock. Always have been, and I suppose always shall.'

'Why?'

'Why should there be any why?' said Paul, without turning round. 'I am simply stuck on this clock. One is bound to be stuck on something: what is wrong with a clock? *Your* trouble seems to be that you are stuck on the past.'



Clara, eyes indecisively fixed on Paul's khaki back, licked her lips once or twice before she actually spoke. Then she cried : ' Have you *no* idea that I've no idea what you mean ? Or Cousin Rosanna, or Aunt Addie either ? Unless you three are combining to send me mad, someone had better tell me what this is all about. As far as I know, the first time I saw that clock was the last day I spent with Rosanna at Sandyhill. I detest it, and should be glad if you'd tell me why. Every time I am told I remember something I don't remember, it turns out to be something about that clock ; and there's such high feeling about it I don't know which way to turn.—Did you, for instance, once put the clock-glass over my head, and did I get stuck inside it ? '

This engaged Paul's attention : he turned round slowly, gained time by soundlessly whistling, then said : ' You're not serious ? ' He considered her. ' But what a thing to forget ! We damn' nearly chipped your face off. Besides, that came quite late on.'

' But, late on in what ? '

' In our story. If you'll tell me how much you've forgotten, I'll tell you where we begin. If you *have* forgotten, you must have some rather too good reason—in which case, don't I err in bringing the whole thing up ? . . . Very well. Yes, I popped that thing over your head because it was time to stop you, and I thought that might do it. Stop you what ? Stop you blackmailing me. We were by then no longer in the Garden of Eden, and I observed Rosanna showing the red light.'—At this point, Paul gave Clara a final suspicious look : what he saw appeared to convince him, for he went on.—' Since the day we did that with the clock you had almost never let up. It was, " Oh, Paul, I feel so wicked ; we've been so wicked ; I have simply got to confess to Cousin Rosanna ! " Then, " Very well, kiss me, then perhaps I'll feel better, then perhaps I won't have to tell Cousin Rosanna *this* time." And this year in, year out, my sweet Clara, every holidays you and I were at Sandyhill. Castor oil got to be lovely compared to your upturned face. Your particular *mise en scène* was the anteroom : you used to put your ear to the clock glass and say, " You know, it *still* doesn't sound the same." That meant your feeling bad and my having to come across. To make things more interesting, one could never be certain that Rosanna might not pop in at one or the other door, not to speak of her passing the terrace window. You and me on such close terms (she wasn't to know the reason) and, of all places, right there by her precious clock—that *would* have finally torn it, for you and me.'

' You don't mean, she'd have cut us out of the will ? '

' Well, Clara, ask yourself—would she not ? Given, I mean, that peculiar obsession *she* had.'

' If Rosanna had an obsession, I don't remember that, either.'



She attempted a wintry smile, and added : ' This seems to be like a whole continent that's submerged, you know.'

' Poetic idea,' Paul conceded, with a glance to the left of his cousin's ear. ' To return to Cousin Rosanna—you know how when you are waiting you have to look back and back again at the clock ? Now our friend, as it happened, had been Rosanna's from girlhood, so it was this clock she connected with her particular habit—a habit she'd had every reason to form. There was nothing Rosanna did not know about waiting. Great-uncle, from whom she got Sandyhill and the money, did not quit the stage till she was well on in life. Therefore Rosanna waited, throughout what are called one's best years—not only for money, exactly like you and me, but for a young man, like, if I may say so, you. The young man—not a nice character, unlike Henry—wasn't moving till Rosanna could declare the bank open. Great-uncle, unfriendly to romance, lived just too long : by the time the money came to Rosanna the man had lost heart and married somebody else. And in those days, if you remember, that was considered final. So Rosanna, like the great girl she was, in her way, cut her losses in the romance direction and went all out to make the money her big thing. She felt free, all things considered, to buy what she liked with it ; she jingled her new purse and looked around for her fun. You and I were her fun. Can't you see how the thing worked out ? The younger the heirs you name, the longer they have to wait, and the more the waiting can do to them. Again, *she'd* expected both love and money, and got money only : can you blame her if she was damned if she'd contemplate you and me, or you or me, having both ? So my marriage—than which I'm sure there are many worse—and your, er, stalemate with regard to Henry, suited her book ideally—couldn't have suited better. As for you and me, biting bits out of each other all over Sandyhill—how her dear old good face used to light up ! The better we loathed each other, the better she liked us. But then came what looked like our interlude—that *that* was no more than a new and more subtle manifestation of mutual hate was, I suppose unavoidably, lost on her. Therefore that, as I tell you, did damn' nearly cook our goose.'

' How ironical,' supplied Clara, ' that would have been, we well know.—All the same, what made her so set on my having to have the clock ?'

' I can only think, because you were a fellow-woman. It was Rosanna's way of saying, " Over to you ! " '

' But, so equally set on the clock never being yours ?'

' *That* couldn't be clearer. I'd more than shown that I liked it ; I'd asked her for it point-blank. I was a man, so she liked my going without. Yes, I did get those cheques, I know—as you also noted. She liked me to make a fool of myself *qua* man. I wanted the clock,

so you were to have it—could the mental process be more straightforward? . . . Yes, I tell you, I asked for it. I was a fool, at nine, and that clock was the only thing in that god-awful house I liked. So I piped up. That was the day our bit of trouble began.

'It was one of those typical headache Sandyhill March mornings—house heated to bursting-point and a livery sun outdoors. A family gathering was in progress—you and your aunt and your mother had come down for the day. I mouldered off by myself, as I frequently did do, to watch the old clock at its cheering work. Rosanna came in and said, "You like that, don't you?" to which I said, "Yes, I should like to have it." To which she said, "Yes, I daresay you would." At which point, you came prancing into the room. I suppose you were about six, and your mother had got you up in a perfectly sickening little scarlet coat, like a monkey wears on a barrel-organ. The moment was jam for Rosanna: she turned to you and she said, "Clara, one day I intend *you* to have that clock. Do you know it has never stopped, and it never will?" You registered pleasure, and I went off down the woods.—None of this comes back?'

'Nothing,' said Clara firmly—with growing fear.

'So that really you don't remember my catching you, later on, in the anteroom, you having glided back for a private gloat at your clock? Or what I said, or we did, or what happened then?'

'No, *no*. Why? What do you mean? Paul, you're simply making me worse.—And what are you *doing*? Leave that alone: *it's mine*!'

'That's just why I'm asking you to step over here,' said Paul, who was lifting the dome with becoming care, to place it on the table beside the clock. 'Why? To make an experiment. Let's face it. Either this works—which it may not—or I take you by hand tomorrow to a psychiatrist. Blood is thicker than water, after all. Come on—I can't wait all night; I have got a date.'

Hooking his arm round Clara's reluctant waist, Paul approached his cousin relentlessly to the clock. After four or five seconds of this enforced staring into the diligent works, Clara began to relax—was she hypnotised? In the absolute nothing behind the clock's anatomy there appeared and began to dilute, like colour dropped into water, the red of the Sandyhill anteroom wallpaper: meanwhile, there crept on another sense the smell of pitched pine exasperated by heating. There could be felt the stare of a draped and open door-window, in which, from moment to moment, somebody might appear. The murmur of voices out of the wintergarden hung on the hazy terrace behind Paul's voice.

'I'll tell you something, Clara. Have you ever *SEEN* a minute? Have you actually had one wriggling inside your hand? Did you know, if you keep your finger inside a clock for a minute, you can pick out that very minute and

*take it home for your own ?*' So it is Paul who stealthily lifts the dome off. It is Paul who selects the finger of Clara's that is to be guided, shrinking, then forced wincing into the works, to be wedged in them, bruised in them, bitten into and eaten up by the cogs. *'No, you have got to keep it there, or you will lose the minute. I am doing the counting—the counting up to sixty.'* . . . But there is to be no sixty. The ticking stops.

We have stopped the clock.

The hundred years are all angry. *'Stop crying, idiot : that won't start it again !'* . . . But oh, oh but, it won't let my finger go ! . . . O-o-h ! . . . *'Suck it, be quiet, don't make a noise !'* . . . What have you made me do ? *'You wanted to.'* You made me want to . . . What shall we, what shall we, what shall we do, do, do ? . . . *'You go out and skip about on the terrace, make them keep on watching you, then they won't come in.'* But what will you do ? *'Something.'* But it's stopped ticking ! . . . *'I tell you, go out and skip about on the terrace.'*

For the second time, Paul withdrew Clara's finger, with a painful jerk, from the clock which had stopped ticking. Her finger was bitten, but not so badly : it had grown too big to go in so deep this time. He was, meanwhile, going on smoothly : *'We were in luck that Friday—because it was a Friday, of course. All I did was put the glass back and walk away. But half an hour later, the regular chap from Southstone turned up to wind it. With a mouth that butter couldn't possibly melt in, I tailed him into the anteroom, just to see. The clock stopped and that half-hour missing made even him turn pale. He sent me to find Rosanna. I was unable to. I came back to watch him put through a long and amazing job. The ladies were upstairs, tying up your finger. By the time he had got the clock set and going, he found he had run things fine for his bus home. He decided, therefore, as Rosanna was missing, not to report the occurrence till the following week. Owing to hurry or worry, the poor brute, he shot out of Sandyhill gate and across the main street in time to be flattened out by a bus coming the other way. Any evidence perished with him : Rosanna was spared the knowledge. In gratitude, you and I subscribed sixpence each towards the funeral wreath. But of course you would never remember that ?'*

*'I remember giving the sixpence for the wreath,'* said Clara slowly, not looking up from her finger.

*'But only that ?'*

*'No, not only that—thank you, Paul.'* There ensued an unavoidable pause, at the end of which Clara said : *'I expect you would like to go now ? I think I heard you say you had got a date ?'*

*'Nothing need stand, my dear, if you'd rather not be alone ?'*

*'Thank you very much ; I, I shall sit with my memories. I expect*

to spend some time getting to know them.' Turning away, with all the detachment possible, she occupied herself in emptying Paul's ash from the shell into a more suitable tray. 'Oh, by the way, Paul,' she added, 'do by all means have the clock. Aunt Addie ought to have known that you wanted it. And, apart from any sentiment of Rosanna's, it means nothing to me. Won't you take it along now?'

'Thanks, that is nice of you, Clara,' said Paul promptly. 'Actually, under the circumstances, I could not very easily take it along this evening; and in fact I have nowhere to put it for the duration. Could you keep it for me, or would it be in your way?'

'There is no reason why it should be in my way: as I say, I expect to move to a larger flat. It is not very useful at present to tell the time by, but apart from that I should never know it was there.'

## MIGHTY OPPOSITES

BY RAYMOND MORTIMER

THERE are a hundred places scattered over all Europe, from Bannockburn to Marathon, from Poltava to Ciudad Rodrigo, unremarkable in themselves, that nevertheless excite the curiosity of the pilgrim because they have been the scene of historic collisions between signal antagonists. For similar reasons, MacVey Napier, a Scottish lawyer now generally forgotten, has a claim upon the attention of the bookish. Born in 1776, he became a member of the Society of Writers to the Signet, and in 1805 was appointed their librarian. He edited the works of Raleigh, and the 7th Edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Then, in 1829, he succeeded Jeffrey as the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*: at once he found two of the most formidable men of his time fighting to possess him, and like other such strategic points, he was subjected to devastating raids and continuous bombardments. Of these rival powers one, Macaulay, is happily still too well known to require description. Not only does he remain the most readable of all historians, but the Life of him by his nephew, Sir George Otto Trevelyan, is altogether worthy of its splendid theme. The other, Brougham, has been less fortunate with posterity. His life, extraordinary in its picturesqueness, has never been adequately described.<sup>1</sup> Yet for years he was the most talked of man in England, and even foreign cabinets followed his movements with attention. His appearance, hardly less eccentric than his conduct, was the daily delight of the caricaturists. The long legs were always enveloped in trousers patterned with a large plaid, and the long frame was surmounted by a long head with a long nose, sharply cut off at its tip. The pale, twitching features were at once forceful and histrionic, revealing a mischievous excitability. Walter Bagehot commented upon his eye: 'If he were a horse, nobody would buy him.' Yet his convivial charm and a friendliness genuine although erratic engaged for him the personal liking of many who knew from experience that he was quarrelsome and untrustworthy. Counsel for Queen Caroline at her trial, Lord Chancellor during the passage of the great Reform Bill, champion of popular education and many other

<sup>1</sup> The fairest account is given in Atlay's *Lives of the Victorian Chancellors*. Lord Campbell's biography, though most entertaining in its spitefulness, is untrustworthy. Dr. Aspinall, in his book *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party*, which deals with only a part of Brougham's career, displays some of the vices as well as all the virtues of the modern historian: having disinterred a mass of new material, he presents it in such a way as to interest few but specialists. Mr. Garrett's Life is readable, but mere advocacy and shockingly disingenuous.

good causes, he forfeited by the vices of his character all the applause he deserved for the generosity of his opinions. His life indeed is cautionary : seldom have such outstanding powers been so lamentably wasted. Oblivion has been his reward, and his name itself is now commonly mispronounced.<sup>1</sup>

When the *Edinburgh Review* was founded in 1802 by Jeffrey, Sydney Smith and Francis Horner, Smith had opposed the collaboration of Brougham, whose contributions, he declared, would be too many, too long, and too political. Moreover Brougham, then a rising barrister aged twenty-four, was already conspicuous for his indiscretion and rashness. But it seemed foolish to exclude a man of such exceptional abilities ; and in due course all Smith's fears were realised : in January 1803 the *Edinburgh* contained no less than seven articles by Brougham. In 1806 he contributed a long and highly favourably review of a pamphlet written by himself. (All contributions to the Review were unsigned.) When MacVey Napier was first asked, in 1807, to contribute to the Review, Jeffrey requested him not to mention the fact to Brougham, because of the strange jealousy with which he regarded any new associates. But when Jeffrey retired from the editorship in 1829, it was through Brougham's interference that Napier succeeded him. The post had been offered to Macaulay, who was ready to accept if the headquarters were moved to London. Brougham disapproved so vehemently that the plan was given up.

Brougham was an old friend of Macaulay's father, with whose assaults on the slave trade he was closely associated. Greville says that Brougham met Tom Macaulay as a boy—which is almost certain ; and that he put himself forward as the monitor and director of his education—a fact for which I can find no confirmation. In January 1825, Jeffrey asked Brougham if he could not find some clever young man to write for the *Review* : the original contributors were getting old and either too busy or too stupid. In August of the same year the *Review* contained the essay on Milton that made Macaulay immediately famous. Brougham was delighted with the success of these first essays, and tried to obtain a Government post for the young lawyer, whom he called 'the greatest genius now coming into the profession.' In return, Macaulay, who was twenty-two years his junior, regarded him with the greatest respect and admiration. But, in October 1828 when the essay on Hallam appeared, Brougham complained that Macaulay took up too much of the *Review* ; and the essay on Mill, in the next number, made him foam with rage. Here is Greville's account of the situation :

<sup>1</sup> Lord Eldon used to bait him from the Bench by giving his name two syllables till Brougham gave a note with the letters B R O O M to mark the correct pronunciation.

He was like a man who brought up a Young Lion, which finished by biting his head off. Brougham and Macaulay disliked one another. Brougham could not forgive his great superiority in many of those accomplishments in which he thought himself unrivalled ; and being at no pains to disguise his jealousy and dislike, the other was not behind him in corresponding feelings of aversion. It was unworthy of both, but most of Brougham, who was the aggressor.

The jealousy between these two star contributors was from the first Napier's principal difficulty. Jeffrey had warned him that if the necessity should arise for resisting Brougham, it would be easier and better to throw him off than the *Review*. When Napier took over in October 1829, Brougham expressed entire confidence in him, yet showed some signs of aloofness. Macaulay wrote to assure the new editor that he would not prove a refractory subject. Three months later he was complaining that the most pointed and ornamental sentences in his article on the Utilitarian Theory had been cut—mere tinsel, of course, but a bait required by the public. He emphasised, however, that he was in no mutinous disposition. Anyone who has been an editor knows that the most professional of his contributors are the least querulous and conceited. Macaulay usually spoke of his articles with more humility than he can really have felt. It took a Brougham to ignite the passion latent in even this most reasonable of men.

The inevitable collision took place in 1830. In February of this year, Macaulay was first elected to Parliament, and Brougham's anger was too great for concealment. They took the oaths together, standing side by side, and Brougham cut him. 'I know that it is jealousy,' was Macaulay's comment, 'because I am not the first man he has used in this way.' The campaign began to involve Napier in August. Brougham presumed that a review of his published speeches would be written by Macaulay, who at once remarked that the man must be out of his wits ; and the flames of his indignation implicated the unhappy editor : 'We have had quite enough of puffing and flattering one another in the *Edinburgh Review*.' But Brougham was now on the crest of the wave. Though universally distrusted, he was the ablest speaker in the House of Commons ; and he was determined to be in effect, if not in name, leader of the Whigs. The July Revolution in France having given an impetus to Liberalism everywhere, Macaulay was engaged by Napier to write an article on this topic. But in September the editor received a cool demand from Brougham :

I must beg, and indeed make a point of, giving you my thoughts on the Revolution, and, therefore, pray send your countermand to Macaulay . . . I can trust no one but myself with it, either in or



out of Parliament. Jeffrey always used to arrange it so upon delicate questions and the reason is obvious—I have already begun my article.

Napier obeyed his instructions, and Macaulay exploded. He did not deny that he was much vexed. He could not hawk his rejected articles up and down Paternoster Row. It was not very agreeable to throw away labour—the not unsuccessful labour, he had thought, of a month. This would not have happened if Brougham had notified his intention earlier. He had himself been asked to write a book on the subject, and had hesitated whether he should not make his excuses to Napier, as this would have given him ampler space for this noble subject. But he thought this course would not be friendly and he had refused. Though a great deal vexed, he was not in the least surprised. He saw all the difficulties of the editor's situation. Indeed he had long foreseen them. He always knew that, in every association, literary or political, Brougham would wish to domineer. He also knew that no Editor of the *Edinburgh Review* could, without risking the ruin of the publication, resolutely oppose the demands of a man so able and so powerful. For this reason he had wished the previous year to give up writing for the *Review*. He had no unkind feelings towards Napier, but he had predicted what would come to pass and his expectations had been exactly realised by Brougham's behaviour. Macaulay continued :

His language, translated into plain English is this :

‘ I must write about this French Revolution, and I will write about it. If you have told Macaulay to do it, you may tell him to let it alone. If he has written an article, he may throw it behind the grate. He would not himself have the assurance to compare his own claims with mine. I am a man who act a prominent part in the world ; he is nobody. If he must do reviewing, there is my speech about the West Indies. Set him to write a puff on that. What have people like him to do, except to eulogise people like me ? ’

Having thus raked the enemy position, Macaulay surveyed his own :

No man likes to be reminded of his inferiority in such a way—I know Brougham dislikes me ; and I have not the slightest doubt that he will feel great pleasure at having taken this subject out of my hands, and at having made me understand—as I do most clearly understand—how far my services are rated below his.

In conclusion, Macaulay said he did not blame Napier in the least, but he did not see why he should make any efforts or sacrifices for a *Review* lying under an intolerable dictation. It was not for want of strong solicitations and tempting offers that he had continued to send his writings to the *Edinburgh Review*.



By permission of the Proprietors of 'Punch'

THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD :  
or Lord Brougham naturalized everywhere

Unhappily we have not Napier's reply to this effusion, but Macaulay's next letter apologised for having given him pain and admitted he had written in haste. He knew Napier's intentions to him were perfectly kind, but Brougham was the person of all persons on earth at whose dictation he felt least inclined to stoop. However, he relinquished his purpose of quitting the *Review*—for the present; and he would like to write a paper about the claims of the Jews.

Brougham's article included a violent attack on the Tory Government with which he had previously been flirting. And in November this Government fell. Lord Grey, in forming the new Ministry, was worried about Brougham, whom he utterly distrusted. He wanted the Rolls, but Grey artfully bought him off with the Wool-sack, a prize more glittering than permanent. He took the title of Baron Brougham and Vaux—the 'Vaux' was pure snobbery. Though Prime Ministers still more often than not were peers, his opportunities for mischief were henceforward limited. The new Lord Chancellor was at once attacked in the House of Commons, and Macaulay rose to defend this 'great man' and to praise his mighty powers of mind. Which sounds very magnanimous. But the attack had come from Croker, perhaps the only living man, except Brougham, for whom Macaulay ever felt personal enmity: 'I detest Croker as I detest cold boiled veal.' Then Brougham gave Macaulay's brother a good living. This was done to please Zachary, and it put Tom in a good humour. He remarked however with mock humility: 'I have not the Chancellor's encyclopædic mind. He is indeed a kind of semi-Solomon. He half knows everything, from the cedar to the hyssop.' And here we are at the root of the trouble. Brougham was a polymath, with pretensions to speak with authority on every subject imaginable. Dissipating recklessly his prodigious energies, he concentrated on nothing—

But in the course of one revolving moon  
Was Chymist, Fidler, States-man and Buffoon  
Then all for Women, Painting, Rhiming, Drinking  
Besides ten thousand Freaks that died in thinking.  
Blest Madman, who could every hour employ  
With something New to wish, or to enjoy!  
Damning and praising were his usual Theamis;  
And both (to show his Judgment) in Extrems.

This attempt at universality, Cobden declared, was the great error and failing of Brougham's public life: he touched everything and finished nothing. Rogers neatly records his fellow-guest's departure from a country house: 'This morning Solon, Lycurgus, Demosthenes, Archimedes, Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Chesterfield, and a great many more, went away in one post-chaise.' The best joke was made when Brougham became Lord Chancellor: 'It is a pity

he has not a little law, for then he would have a smattering of everything.'

Now polymath met polymath ; and though Macaulay did not share Brougham's pretensions to a knowledge of natural science, everything he did know, he knew better ; also he was incomparably more skilful in giving to his knowledge an inviting shape. According to Greville, Macaulay confessed that not only Whewell (the Master of Trinity), but Brougham, had more universal knowledge than himself. On another occasion, however, he urged the superior claims of Jeffrey : 'Brougham does one thing well, two or three things indifferently, and a hundred things detestably. His Parliamentary speaking is admirable, his forensic speaking poor, his writing at the very best secondhand. As to his Hydrostatics, his Political Philosophy, his Equity Judgments, his Translations from the Greek, they are really below contempt.' Brougham for his part was not behind-hand in denigration. When the first volume of Macaulay's *History* appeared he called its author a tolerably good writer of romances. Often, too, he attacked the vulgarity of his style and his lack of logic. But his most usual and effective line was to dismiss Macaulay as a bore—'the second or third greatest bore in society I have ever known . . . I certainly know that he is by others despised for it, as he is pretty sure one day to hear.' There was some substance in this allegation. Wherever Macaulay was, he held the floor, pouring forth from his prodigious memory an uninterrupted stream of information, embellished of course with just comments and apt quotations. Some of the grandest bores one has met are deficient in neither intellect nor learning. Indeed these virtues may serve to make the boredom more excruciating than anything an empty-headed chatter-box could hope to inflict. In 1836, Greville talked of Macaulay's marked inferiority to Brougham in society as well as in the House. His face was round, thick and unmeaning, he declared ; and he had a lisp. The gracefulness, lightness and variety conspicuous in his writings were absent from his talk, which was too didactic, altogether too 'good.' Brougham, on the other hand, had a melodious voice, and in his talk was all light, spirit, gaiety ; always amusing, always instructive, never tedious. But in 1850 Greville added that all this had ceased to be true of Brougham. Macaulay, he continued, lacked the wit and charm of the best talkers, but he was a marvellous and, in his own way, unrivalled and delightful talker. It seems certain that in choice of topics Macaulay paid little attention to the nature of his audience. The force of the bore commonly derives from a refusal to treat his victim as an individual. As a rule he is abnormally insensitive to the feelings of others and therefore has no notion of the effect he is making. Yet there are also bores, princes of their kind, whose pleasure in their own words is rendered more exquisite by the

consciousness of cruelty. They look out eagerly for the drooping jaw, the glazing eye. Sometimes even they parade their triumph: 'I know I am boring you,' they boast, and return with renewed appetite to strain the windlasses of the rack. Macaulay, one may presume, never suspected that anyone could possibly find him tedious. (It is a grim saying that each of us is somebody's most redoubted bore.) He would sit foursquare and pronounce an interminable monologue, relieved by what Sydney Smith called 'occasional flashes of silence.' Carlyle had the same habit, and it is interesting to note that he failed, at his first meeting with Macaulay, to get one word in. ('Macaulay is well for a while,' he remarked, 'but one wouldn't live under Niagara.') If you shared Macaulay's interests and were content not to talk oneself, listening to him must have been a fascinating experience. Even so, Lady Holland, who delighted in his conversation, sometimes noticed that other guests were beginning to wilt. Whereupon, the story goes, she would call a footman: 'Tell Mr. Macaulay that that will do.'<sup>1</sup> And much as the company had enjoyed the facund flow, when he left a house, the consequent tranquillity was felt as rather a relief.

Brougham was at the height of his success in 1831. Carlyle considered him the cunningest and strongest man in England, and with no better principle than Napoleon: it would be no surprise if he became a second Cromwell. (Carlyle had not yet come to worship Cromwell as a hero.) Everyone was talking of Brougham, 'next to the King the most popular man in England.' These are Macaulay's words, but he added, 'His popularity will go down and he will find himself alone'—a prophecy that was realised within a few years. About the same time Macaulay's mother died, and Brougham wrote asking him to give Zachary his sympathy and assured him of his feeling for them both. But the two men still did not speak. While Brougham remained Lord Chancellor he was too much absorbed in his political and judicial functions to give much trouble to Napier, though he sent articles regularly to the *Edinburgh*. In July 1834 Grey's ministry was obliged to resign. This was blamed unfairly upon Brougham, but it is certain that he was pleased by the event; and he was largely responsible for Melbourne becoming the head of the new government. Now regarding himself as the power behind the Prime Minister's chair, he was swept by his arrogance into the most capricious and absurd behaviour. But in November the Ministry fell, and the Tories held office till April. Then Melbourne returned to power. Brougham was not given the

<sup>1</sup> In this Century of the Common Man the admirable versatility of menservants is likely to be forgotten. Of Brougham, who lacked fastidiousness in private as in public life, oral tradition relates that, when interrupted by a carnal impulse, he would ring for a footman, and shout, in the Scottish accent that he always retained: 'John, fetch me a hoover!'

Woolsack. An explanation was provided in a letter to him from the new Prime Minister. He told Brougham that his character was injured in the public estimation ; that this was his own fault ; that his conduct had been largely responsible for the fall of the Government. He had domineered ; he had interfered ; he had intrigued with the Press. 'Nobody knows and appreciates your natural vigour better than I do. I know also that those who are weak for good are strong for mischief.'

Brougham turned his energies to the *Edinburgh Review*, which in April 1835 contained six articles from his pen. The Great Seal had been put into commission and he expected soon to be Chancellor again. But Napier, who knew that Brougham had damaged himself with the Whig's beyond repair, was no longer prepared to endure his tyranny, and in June Brougham for the first time showed himself openly hostile :

Ever since you succeeded to the management of the *Edinburgh Review*, I have found that my assistance was reckoned, justly God knows, a very secondary object, and that one of the earliest friends of the Journal, and who had (Jeffrey will inform you) enabled it to struggle through its first difficulties as much as any one or even two of the contributors, was now next thing to laid upon the shelf.

He ended with a threat that he would cease his contributions. Napier answered that he was astonished and hurt ; adding that he had risked the loss of a very first-rate contributor to meet Brougham's wishes. Whereupon Brougham thought it wise to be mollified. He never, he said, quarrelled with trifles.

But in September he sent articles offensive to the Whigs, and Napier returned to the attack. Painful as it was to oppose the wishes of one who had been so constant, so powerful, and so ready a contributor, he could not allow the *Review* to diverge from its traditional Whig loyalty. Brougham subsided. No new Chancellor had been appointed, and he was still hoping to be reinstated. But in January 1836 the Great Seal was given to the innocuous and mediocre Sir Christopher Pepys, now Lord Cottenham. 'I am like a man,' Melbourne remarked, 'who has broken for good with a termagant mistress, and married the best of cooks.' He had decided that, dangerous as an enemy, Brougham was certain destruction as a friend. Brougham learnt the news from the newspapers. He was frantic. No one had ever fallen so fast and so far. (This was the opinion of Peel, who declared Brougham the most powerful man he had known in the House of Commons.)

At the height of his triumphs, Brougham's pranks had laid him open to the charge of madness. He was said to have used the Great Seal as a griddle on which to cook pancakes. Now he became



deranged with profound melancholy. He spent the whole year brooding over his wrongs at a fishing village on the Mediterranean, Cannes, where he had built himself a house. His one aim was revenge, and he hoped to use his old association with the great Whig *Review* to fill its pages with attacks upon the Whigs. So Napier was once more in trouble. 'I have long feared that, in proportion as your views came to differ from those entertained by the majority of supporters of the *Review* and my own, my situation as editor would become more and more embarrassing.' Brougham again made a strategic retreat. He was wholly unable, he declared, to take the matter in so very serious a light. But he must say that the previous editor, Jeffrey, had never during a quarter of a century expressed the least *impatience* of advice. Napier, confident that he had all the Whigs behind him, waxed increasingly bold and pressed the withdrawing enemy. John Allen had written from Holland House to assure him that however Brougham might coax and bluster, he would never break with the *Review*. So Napier picked up his pen: 'He who gives advice always proceeds to abuse when his advice is not implicitly followed. I have more than once put the existence of the *Review* to hazard for yielding more to your wishes than others thought I ought to have done.' Jeffrey, invited to arbitrate, refused, but made it clear that he supported Napier. Brougham then began to whine. (It is the habit of the most outrageous egotists to consider themselves ill-used.) His treatment by the Government, he declared, had been the *ne plus ultra* of ingratitude, baseness and treachery. He pitied Napier. 'They will never cease till they worry you out of your connection with me and get the whole control of the *Review* into their hands by forcing you to resign it yourself.'

Since 1834, Macaulay had been in India, where despite his immense labours he had continued to contribute to the *Review*. He therefore had not been involved in these interchanges, but in 1838 he returned to England, and was elected Member for Edinburgh. He heard that Brougham was threatening to make him rue his baseness in not calling upon him; and of course he rushed to Napier's support. 'This strange man, finding himself almost alone in the world, absolutely unconnected with either Whigs or Conservatives, and not having a single vote in either House of Parliament at his command except his own, is desirous to make the *Review* his organ.' He then commented on the style used by Brougham in his articles: 'They are, indeed, models of magazine writing as distinguished from other sorts of writing. They are not, I think, made for duration. Everything about them is exaggerated, incorrect, sketchy. All the characters are either too black or too fair.' This criticism is none the less just because it might be applied to the essays of Macaulay himself; indeed it repeats almost word for word comments made upon



them by Brougham. Macaulay continued that Napier's caution and firmness had done wonders. The only crime of Brougham's old friends had been that they could not help finding him a habitual and incurable traitor :

As to Brougham's feelings towards myself, I know and have known for a long time that he hates me. If, during the last ten years, I have gained any reputation either in politics or in letters, if I had had any success in life, it has been without his help and countenance, and often in spite of his utmost exertions to keep me down . . . I did not call on him when I went away . . . it would be strange indeed if now, when he is squandering the remains of his public character in an attempt to ruin the Party of which he was a member then, and of which I am a member still, I should begin to pay court to him. For the sake of the long intimacy which subsisted between him and my father, and of the mutual good offices which passed between them, I will not, unless I am compelled, make any public attack upon him. But this is really the only tie which constrains me, for I neither love him nor fear him.

Napier had the good sense, the tact, and the patience required for coping with what Macaulay called 'the petty jealousies and morbid irritabilities of the writing tribe.' But the necessary stamina he lacked. The squabbles with Brougham agitated him terribly, and his health was now causing his friends grave alarm. It was thought he might have to resign, and that Jeffrey's son-in-law, Empson would replace him. If that happened, Brougham threatened that he would relinquish every other object in order to ruin the *Review*. He would willingly lay out his last sixpence in the enterprise. He would make revenge on Empson the one business of the remaining years of his life. 'Verily he hath a devil,' was Sydney Smith's comment, and Macaulay declared—'He has reached that happy point at which it is equally impossible for him to gain character as to lose it.' But in the following February the two mighty men met in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Brougham greeted Macaulay as if they had breakfasted together that morning.

Later in that year the news of Brougham's death reached London. This turned out to be a hoax, and Brougham complained that it was scandalous and cruel towards Lord Wellesley, 'whom it nearly killed.' (Wellesley was the closest friend remaining to him. They were united by bitterness, disappointment, and hatred of Melbourne. Wellesley felt very jealous of his brother Wellington, and had quarrelled with the Whigs because they would not make him Duke of Hindostan.) There can be no doubt that the hoax was concocted by Brougham himself, but it did him little good, for the obituary notices were almost uniformly hostile. Soon after this Jeffrey wrote of him, 'A glorious planet he might have been, but disdaining to be less than

the sun, he has run the wild career of a comet, threatening all systems with disturbance—and what will the end be?’

Napier fortunately did not succumb; he held his ground, and between October 1840 and January 1846 Brougham did not contribute to the *Review*. Nevertheless he continued to give Napier the benefit of his advice. In January 1840 Macaulay's Essay on Clive had excited his censure. It showed a most profligate political morality: ‘No, no—all the sentences a man can turn, even if he made them in pure taste, and not in Tom's snip-snap taste of the Lower Empire—all won't avail against a rotten morality.’ He himself had been trying, and chiefly in the *Edinburgh Review*, to restore a better, a purer, and a higher standard of morals. He pitied Macaulay for having allowed his conscience to go to sleep.

If only he knew the comfort of laying down his head to sleep, or may be to die, after writing 40 years, and speaking 35, and never having once said one word, or written one word, but in favour of the highest strain of public virtue!

Coming from Brougham, of all men, this complacency is delightful. However virtuous his public utterances, he was untruthful as well as treacherous, and had well earned the nickname of ‘Old Wicked Shifts.’ Lawyers perhaps deserve a particular indulgence, because they are permitted, nay obliged, by the ethics of their profession to make the best possible case for their clients. This entails defending causes they believe to be bad with arguments they know to be dishonest. Who can be surprised if they sometimes acquire a chronic indifference to principle, and if this occupational disease continues to afflict them when they enter political life? Brougham displayed so much zeal in forwarding so many good causes that one hesitates to dismiss him as merely and always a careerist; and for popular education at least his enthusiasm seems to have been genuine. It is indeed probable that he was usually convinced—at the moment—of his own sincerity: the great orator, like the great actor, must delude himself before he can delude his audience. Brougham's quarrels were usually as impermanent as they were envenomed; for he was always able to forget what he had done and said and felt a short time before. Altogether the history of his life justifies us in assuming that like many other Chancellors he had no permanent principle except that he himself ought to be in power. Unluckily for him, he was incomparably less agile than some of his predecessors and successors in retaining power. Even before he was cast off by the Whigs he flirted alternately—and sometimes even simultaneously—with the Radicals and the Tories. Later he became friendly with the Duke of Wellington, and also with Croker—whose bad edition of Boswell he praised, doubtless from hatred of Macaulay.

In 1841 he pronounced condescendingly that Macaulay's essay on Warren Hastings, despite the vulgarity and the usual want of all reasoning, was not at all deficient in interest or even entertainment. The following year he wrote about an article in the latest number of the *Review*: 'Why will Macaulay fancy that a luscious style is fine writing?' Napier replied with obvious satisfaction that the offending article was in fact by Sir James Stephen.

In 1843 Macaulay writes:

Brougham is all but mad. One of his freaks has been making up violently to me. After a complete cut,—for we had not spoken for years,—he saw me in the House of Lords, ran to the bar, caught my hand, tapped me on the shoulder, all but embraced me, praised my verses, urged me to speak more in Parliament, and so on. I was as dry and cold as possible, and I thought I should have put a stop to his civilities. But no. A few days after he came to Miss Berry's in the evening, and accosted me again in the same style. I extricated myself as fast as I could, made my bow to my hostess and walked home.

At this period Brougham was seeking, Jeffrey relates, a reconciliation with Napier; no further letters between them exist, but the *Review* in January 1846 contained an article by Brougham, his last contribution. For in February 1847 Napier died, and was succeeded by the detested Empson.

The published correspondence of MacVey Napier, from which much of the material for this paper has been drawn, is a little known and most entertaining book. In my copy there is a pencil note by Augustine Birrell, to whom it belonged:

This is one of the most interesting Collections of Letters ever published. It reads like a novel—being full of Characters revealed by themselves. Vanity, Conceit, Self-Imposture, False Perspective, Littleness of Mind, are noticeable in at least half its pages. Brougham and Macaulay are the two leading figures, and turn the limelight on each other's frailties with unfailing gusto. Carlyle and Mill and Sir James Stephen, the pedantic Senior, the futile Rogers, are all to be seen in *naturalibus*. Poor Napier.

In 1848 Brougham played the last of his extravagant pranks. Though his French was more fluent than correct, he was seized with a wild hope that his talents might procure for him in the new revolutionary government of France the power he could no longer expect among his own countrymen. So he applied for French citizenship. The Minister of Justice, M. Crémieux, had to write several frank letters before he could convince the ex-Chancellor that by such a change of citizenship he would forfeit not only his title but his pension.

There is little left to record of the relations between the two

polymaths. In 1849 Macaulay reports Brougham as noisily friendly : 'I know how mortally he hates and how bitterly he reviles me. He has outlived his power to injure. He has not however outlived his power to amuse.' And finally in 1858, 'Strange fellow ! His power gone, his spite immortal. A dead nettle.' In the following year Macaulay died. He was fortunate in the circumstances no less of his death than of his life, for when he ceased to breathe he had the first number of the 'CORNHILL' open before him, at the first page of Thackeray's *Lovell the Widower*. Brougham lived on for nine more years ; his last recorded pronouncement upon his old enemy dates from 1861 : 'Poor Tom Macaulay hardly knew a triangle from a square, and had little or no legal knowledge.'

Brougham has no very solid claim upon posterity as a lawyer, a statesman, or a writer. He was an inattentive and partisan judge, whose decisions have not, I understand, proved important in the history of our law. Politically his name is not identified with any special achievement, still less with any general principle. While his *Historical Sketches* of statesmen in the reign of George III are lively and informative, most of his writings are not original even in their mistakes. It is for the vehemence of his character that this extraordinary being, who made himself the cynosure of his age, merits the attention also of posterity. So picturesque a subject may yet inspire a biographical masterpiece. Meanwhile even the carriage that Brougham invented and that promised to perpetuate his name now exists only in ageing memories, associated with the smell of leather-polish and the uneasy excitement of going to children's parties. At Cannes, however, at the end of a mall of plane-trees close to the harbour, a more than life-size effigy of Brougham still celebrates the gratitude of the inhabitants to the inventor of that fashionable watering-place. Or has even this memorial been obliterated ? And is Brougham, who brought upon his head the unanimous indignation of his countrymen, the victim seventy-five years after his death of the vindictiveness and fear with which the Germans regard every bearer of an English name ?

## FUTURISM AND POETRY

BY MAURICE BOWRA

IN 1912 Filippo Marinetti issued his notorious *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* and was greeted with some admiration and much ridicule. If any then believed that a new poet had arisen, they were soon disappointed. Marinetti has not added to the treasures of literature and his ridiculous career, with its noisy exhibitionism and its cult of violence, has found a suitable climax in his service with the Italian legion in Russia. But the *Manifesto* is still interesting as a historical document and has produced results of which its author cannot have dreamed and certainly would not approve. We can now see that it is an extreme example of those Modernist tendencies which invaded European literature in the early years of this century and have influenced a large number of writers. In the nineteenth century poetry had on the whole maintained a grand style and confined itself to certain recognised spheres of sentiment. Modernism has attempted to destroy the old style and to break down the old limitation of subjects; it aims at making poetry convey the real experiences of modern man in the language of his own times. It is responsible for the work of T. S. Eliot; it has even shown its presence in Blok's *The Twelve* and in the later poetry of W. B. Yeats; the younger poets of France and England owe to it their free handling of syntax, their conversational tone, their ability to treat of many subjects denied to the grave rhetoric of their predecessors, their cult of a refined, highly personal sensibility. Its origins go back to poets so different as Rimbaud and Browning, Donne and Mallarmé. It has taken various forms and can be seen at work in Dadaism, Surrealism, and in other movements which have from time to time attracted notice. In this general trend Futurism, as Marinetti defined it, has a distinctive place.

Like other forms of Modernism, Futurism tries to convey the experiences of modern man in a suitably vivid form, but unlike them it demands a complete break with the past and the construction of entirely new means of expression. While T. S. Eliot admits his debt to Middleton and Laforgue and Ezra Pound claims acquaintance with Chinese and Provencal, Marinetti announces his 'horror of what is old and known, and love of the new and unforeseen.' He dismisses even *vers libre* because it limits the free expression of lyrical emotion. He wishes to destroy syntax, to get rid of adjectives and adverbs 'because the naked substantive keeps its essential colour' and to replace existing systems of punctuation by mathematical and

musical signs. He advocates and practises a kind of telegraphic language, varied by different sizes and types of print in the manner of Mallarmé's *Un Coup de Dés*. This annihilation of existing methods is said to be justified by the mechanical age in which we live. For Marinetti what matter in the modern world are such things as trains, machine-guns, aeroplanes, underground railways and wireless telegraphy. He claims that the experiences found in these are the most vivid that we know and that poetry must express them in a new manner. He rejects the familiar subjects of poetry and proclaims the 'need of spitting every day on the altar of art.' Therefore he rejects love as sentimentalism and glorifies war as 'the bloody and necessary test of a people's force.' He seems to see man as living through his machines and as being almost a machine himself. He wishes to make poetry conform to this curious conception, and his own work shows how he thinks that this should be done.

Though Marinetti's opinions were well suited to the turgid pretences of Fascism, they produced no results of interest in Italy, where literature has never been so barren as in the last thirty years. The cult of 'heroic' violence has not touched Italian poets to write anything worth reading, and achievements in aviation and motor-racing, so popular with the successors of Alberti and Leonardo, have done nothing for art. This was perhaps to be expected, and no doubt many saw from the start that Marinetti's dreams were absurd in an age which has already outlived its first excitement over the internal combustion engine. In Western Europe Futurism made little impression. Guillaume Apollinaire took it up for a short period and in 1913 published his *Futurist Anti-tradition* which won notoriety by its use of 'le mot de Cambronne' and caused some scandal. But Apollinaire's own work, despite his way of presenting poems in the shape of rain or fountains in *Calligrammes* and his avoidance of any punctuation, remained classical in spirit and had none of Marinetti's violence. In England the periodical *Blast* breathed the hopes of Futurism through a few numbers, and then ceased. But we can imagine that in other circumstances this mechanical, revolutionary, sensational view of life might make a different appeal. Where machines have the charm of novelty, where revolution is more than a literary ambition, where violence is believed to serve high ends, Marinetti's Futurism might produce effective results. By one of history's more fanciful ironies Futurism has had its chief influence in Russia, the country against which Marinetti, now a middle-aged major, has taken arms.

Like other Modernists, the Futurists began by being rebels against established literary standards, and especially against those of the Russian Symbolists, whose grand manner and mystical convictions they derided and thought hostile to a truly modern poetry. In



1912 there appeared over the signatures of D. Burlyuk, A. Kruchenykh, V. Mayakovsky and V. Khlebnikov, a remarkable manifesto called *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste*. It is amusing enough to deserve quotation in full :

For readers our New First and Unexpected.

We alone are the *face of our time*. The trumpet of the time sounds in our art of words.

The past is stifling. The Academy and Pushkin are more unintelligible than hieroglyphs.

Throw Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, etc. overboard from the steamer of modernity.

Who forgets his first love will not know his last.

Who is fool enough to give his last love to Balmont's scented lechery?

Would it reflect the manly soul of to-day?

Who is coward enough to be afraid of tearing the paper armour off warrior Bryusov's frock-coat? Is there in it any dawn of unknown beauties?

Wash your hands which are filthy with the dirty slime of books scribbled by countless Leonid Andreevs.

All those Kuprins, Bloks, Sologubs, Remizovs, Averchenkos, Chernys, Kuzmins, Bunins, etc. etc.—all they want is a villa by the river. That is how fate rewards tailors.

From the heights of skyscrapers we look down on their insignificance.

We demand respect for the poet's right—

1. To enlarge the vocabulary with arbitrary and derivative words (neologisms).
2. To uncompromising hatred for the language used hitherto.
3. To tear with horror from their proud heads the crown of worthless fame made out of bath-room brushes.
4. To stand upon the rock of the word 'We' in a sea of whistles and indignation.

And if our lines show the dirty traces of your 'common sense' and 'good taste,' yet the first lightnings of a New Dawn of Beauty in the Self-Sufficient Word are already trembling upon them.

This document shows its affinity to Marinetti and his kind. It is a complete rejection of the Russian literary past; it claims to be the real voice of modernity; it rejects old 'sentimental' themes like love and romance; it demands the creation of a new vocabulary; it hints at a glorification of mechanical things in its references to steamers and skyscrapers. It recalls Marinetti above all in its cocksure impudence, its strident desire to get rid of everything old, and its arrogant assumption that its adherents alone have the right to be called poets.

When the Russian Futurists so flung their ideas at the public, their country was enjoying a great revival of poetry. Many of the names which they dismiss so rudely are of men who helped to create



the greatest period of Russian poetry since the death of Lermontov in 1841. The present which they so violently rejected bore no resemblance to the exhausted Italian scene on which the only figure of importance was D'Annunzio, and even he had passed his poetical zenith. It might be fair to judge the Futurists by their own claims and to see if they have justified them. The answer could only be that they have not. Of the four signatories, only two, Khlebnikov and Mayakovsky, need be treated seriously. Burlyuk produced nothing of lasting interest, and though Kruchenykh made amusing attempts to create a kind of 'Jabberwocky' language which recalls the later work of James Joyce, he seems to have abandoned it and to have descended to intelligible, though not very distinguished, writing. But the other two count. In a time of great stress and change they tried to make poetry live and conducted some remarkable experiments with it. This is not to say that they have done all that they promised, but they have done something, and that is as much as we can hope from writers of manifestoes.

Vladimir Khlebnikov (1885-1922) was a strangely compounded character. On the one hand he was a creative philologist, a man who loved words so well and had so fine a feeling for his own language, that he was always experimenting with it, inventing new words, trying old words in new combinations, feeling his way to some essential, primitive Russian which should be more expressive than the time-worn instrument of contemporary literature. On the other hand he was a prophet of the primitive and the irrational, of all those apprehensions and suspicions which uncivilised man feels because he cannot rationalise them. Khlebnikov was extremely superstitious in his own life and felt most at home among primitive peoples or in stories of men and women who are not moved by reason. The combination of such characteristics is uncommon, but it was well suited to Futurism which both claimed an interest in the creation of new words and denied the rational nature of man. Marinetti had called for 'the word at liberty' and claimed the superiority of intuition to intelligence. Khlebnikov in his own way agreed with him. He wished to change his language not so much because he was tired of it as because he was by temperament an experimental philologist; he would have little to do with the civilised and rational way of looking at things because he was at heart uncivilised and primitive, a Slav who wished to get back to the soul of his race before Christianity and Westernisation had imposed their patterns on it, a man of letters who enjoyed displaying his skill at catching and conveying all the stranger shadows which pass over the human consciousness.

With an equipment like this Khlebnikov could hardly expect to be a popular poet. Nor was he. He is important because he exerted

a considerable influence on other poets and because his poetry is, despite its oddities, valuable for its own sake. It took him time to find subjects which suited him, and his early work has an experimental character. He invented words, he played with roots and formations, and in his *Oath by Laughter* he created a whole poem of newly coined derivatives from the Russian word for 'laughter,' *smekh*. It is a brilliant *tour de force*, amusing and wonderfully ingenious. Indeed the new words look strangely convincing to a foreigner. But as yet Khlebnikov's difficulty was to find subjects suited to this philological inventiveness, and it is not surprising that he sought out themes extremely remote from the modern world, in the Stone Age or the old Slavonic world. His manner varies with his subjects, but tends to be impressionistic and even telegraphic. His treatment of syntax can be seen from his use of proper names as imperatives :

*Farm-house at night—Genghiz Khan !  
Rustle, grey birches.  
Red sky at night—Zarathrustra !  
But blue sky—Mozart !*

His Futurism, despite its primitive emotions, still keeps a high-brow air. There is a discord between his emotions and his intellect which he has not fully solved.

The solution was found for him by the War and the Revolution. Like other Russian poets, Khlebnikov viewed the war with horror and the Revolution with rapturous joy. If the first simplified his manner for him and drove him to express himself in a noble, austere manner, the second awoke in him an ecstatic excitement in liberty and a sense of vast new prospects opening to the future. While other poets saw the revolution as a tragic event needed to purify Russia, Khlebnikov, who had been sent to prison for political reasons when a student, saw a new, vivifying force which should animate Russia to great activities and creation. In the first thrill of it he wrote poems which are almost like songs :

*Now naked comes Liberty walking  
And on hearts scatters flowers of love ;  
We march on in step with her, talking  
Like old friends to the skies above.*

*We are fighters whose hands never quiver  
When they bang on a resolute shield.  
There and here, and for ever, for ever  
The people its power shall wield.*

*From the windows let singing girls praise us,  
Of age-old campaigns are their songs,  
Of the Sun, whose true service obeys us,  
Of the People, to whom rule belongs.*

A great simplification has taken place in Khlebnikov's style. The neologisms and learned, literary references have gone; the syntax is easy and straightforward. What remains is the vivid use of imagery to convey excited states of mind.

The Revolution demanded and created other emotions than this, and in his poems from 1917 to his death in 1922 Khlebnikov found a proper field for his talents in a new kind of heroic theme. The poet Gumilev said of him, 'Many of his verses seem to be the fragments of a great epic which has never been written.' Khlebnikov wrote several poems which breathe a heroic spirit of rebellion. In some he touches on the present; in others he deals with themes from the past which were relevant to his time. His poem on Stenka Razin is a fine attempt to catch the spirit of the old rebel, who is the type of natural man asserting his rights:

*And Razin's choked 'I listen'  
Rises up to the hills of day  
As a red flag flies on a roof-top  
And tells of troops on the way.*

So too Khlebnikov used the figure of a wise philosopher in *Ladimir* to tell of the far-reaching aspirations which the revolution woke in him for a Utopian future when men should be in harmony with nature and with each other:

*You shall set up on earth a spool  
Where the thunder is only a wire  
And with streams and dragons flies  
Sing the girl of your desire,  
A sign that all is levelled  
Between labour and idleness.*

He held such hopes of the revolution, and he died before they could be disappointed.

Khlebnikov was fully aware of what the revolution meant in horror and destruction, and his poems about it were characteristically sincere. He recognised the facts, but believed that something incalculably magnificent would arise from them. The mixture of his intellectual grasp and his high hopes is well displayed in *I believe, sang the guns*. It is a vision of the revolutionary scene in which the powers of new gods are revealed, and it hints at horrors of revenge and brutality:

*The god of the pavements,  
Painted in yesterday's blood,  
In the briars of fresh graves,  
In the bandages of sniping armies,*

*Looks from public places at night  
 With the large eyes of death,  
 In a frame of cobble-stones.  
 The picture of a grim god  
 On a grey board  
 Set up by the hands of the days  
 Hangs over the capital.*

Khlebnikov dwells on the storm of destruction and the passions which drive it, on the death-sentences given in cellars, on the shattering of glass by bullets, on the eyes staring 'like two gun-barrels,' on the noise of an alarm in the sky. Then he rises to his close :

*The poplar we felled, the poplar in salvoes  
 Fell to the ground in leaves of lead  
 On the crowds, on the public places !  
 The poplar we felled, crashed, fell  
 Covering with death's leaves the faces of many.  
 All night long screams the iron rattle,  
 And stars croak over the roof of the death-chamber.  
 The night is blacker than pitch. . . .  
 Multitudes of stars, multitudes of birds  
 Suddenly rise in the air.  
 I have startled them.*

In this way Khlebnikov not only said what he felt about the revolution but found a means to reconcile his own conflicting gifts. In a highly sensitive and intellectual style he wrote about the primitive feelings which were at the root of his nature.

Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893-1930), who was the associate of Khlebnikov is the beginnings of Russian Futurism, was a man of very dissimilar gifts. He was no philologist and he had no yearnings for primitive life. His dislike of the past was complete and genuine, the disgust of a misfit for a society which does not honour him. Before the Revolution he announced his contempt for all writers and proclaimed that it was better to be a criminal or a business man. He went to prison more than once and was a natural anarchist. He had a commanding personality, a great height and a resonant voice. He understood the art of self-advertisement and drew attention to himself by wearing an enormous yellow tie—'I made a tie-shirt and shirt-tie. Impression—irresistible.' His personality seems to have some real similarity to Marinetti's. He really liked noise and bluster and opposition. In him Futurism was a driving, self-assertive force rather than a means of expression. He was a malcontent, bent on destroying both for the fun of destruction and for his dislike of a world which hampered him. By an unforeseen stroke of luck he found himself included in a victorious majority and recognised almost as a national poet.

The paradox of Mayakovsky's career is that this anarchical individualist should have come to be recognised after his death by Stalin as 'the best and most talented poet of our Soviet epoch.' This success was not immediate. Lenin, for instance, said, 'I understand Pushkin and appreciate both him and Nekrasov, but as for Mayakovsky, I am sorry, I do not understand him.' Nor was Lenin alone. Right up to his death Mayakovsky met with considerable opposition from those who refused to believe that Futurism was the right art for a liberated proletariat. His peculiar manner was not well received by the All-Russian Union of Workmen Writers whose aim was 'to create a proletarian socialistic literature, both artistic and scientific, answering to the ideals of the revolutionary communistic proletariat.' None the less Mayakovsky succeeded. His success was a triumph of character. He had long been a member of the Communist Party and accepted the triumph of Lenin with the words 'It is my revolution.' He was determined to be a revolutionary poet and changed his art to suit the new times. By a bold syllogism he identified Futurism with proletarian art—'Only the proletariat will create new things, and we, the Futurists, are the only ones to follow in the footsteps of the proletariat. . . . Futurism is the ideology of the proletariat. . . . Futurism is proletarian art.' The logic may not be impeccable, but the courage of the claim is undeniable. Anyhow, Mayakovsky and his friends were accepted as the poets of the Soviets.

The Revolution was welcomed by Mayakovsky because it destroyed a society which he disliked and despised. The sense of deliverance from it awoke in him a strong lyrical desire to sing of a new world in which men were free. He did not at first see this world very clearly or understand the difficulties which beset it. For the moment he was overjoyed that it had come into existence and that it offered him a self-realisation for which he could not otherwise have hoped. In this mood he wrote *Our March* :

*Tramp squares with rebellious treading !  
Up heads ! In proud ridges be seen !  
In the second flood we are spreading  
Every city on earth will be clean.*

*Pied days plod.  
Slowly the years' waggons come.  
Speed's our god.  
Hearts are beating a drum.*

*What gold is than ours diviner ?  
Can the waspy bullets sting ?  
Than our songs no weapons are finer.  
Our gold is in shouts that ring.*

*Green let the grass grow,  
Covering days past.  
Rainbow, gleam, glow.  
Let galloping years travel fast.*

*Do not look to the stars or bother ;  
Without them our singing shall blow.  
Oh ask, Great Bear, our Mother,  
That alive to the stars we go.*

*Drink of delight ! Drink ! Shout !  
Veins with the spring-flood thrumming.  
Hearts up ! Strike out !  
Our breasts are brass cymbals drumming !*

This is a revolutionary song, but it is also a song of Futurism in its ecstatic denial of the past, its sense of a quickened and unhindered energy, its belief that life has begun to move at a great speed. For the moment it really looked as if Futurism was able to meet the poetical needs of the Revolution.

This ecstatic condition was soon brought into contact with realities. The Soviets, attacked by enemies at home and abroad and faced by appalling problems of organisation and education, began soon enough to take a realistic view of the position. The centralised authority demanded obedience before everything else and expected its poets to work for it and not to follow their own fancies. Though Mayakovsky did not agree with most of the literary groups which the Revolution produced, he was as ardent a supporter of the régime as any of them and turned himself into one of its most vociferous servants. He curbed his lyrical gift and tried to become an intelligible and even a useful poet. Even so early as 1918, when he felt that the Red Navy needed encouragement, he wrote his *Left March* for them. Like *Our March* it is inspired by the sense of vast new prospects and has all Mayakovsky's unrestrained enthusiasm, but it is closer to the facts of the political situation and touches boldly on it. His lyrical freshness is modified by his sense of reality. The poem ends on a defiant, bloodthirsty note :

*Out there  
Past the fiery peaks advance  
To a sunny land unknown.  
Past hunger,  
Past oceans of pestilence,  
Let millions march on.  
Though hirelings circle to crush us*

*And the lava of steel flow swift,  
The Entente cannot conquer the Russias.  
Left!  
Left!  
Left!*

*Does the eagle's eye grow dim  
While on old haunts it lingers?  
Make fast  
On the throat of the world  
Your proletarian fingers!  
Fling chests out straight!  
In the sky let the banners drift!  
Who marches there with the right?  
Left!  
Left!  
Left!*

There is something here of the old ecstasy, but politics have come into the poetry and were never again to leave it.

Between 1918 and 1930 Mayakovsky wrote an enormous quantity of verse. He wrote many poems both long and short, plays, advertisements, posters. He was a great performer on the platform, and, like Marinetti, enjoyed reciting his works to audiences whose interruptions he rebuffed with wit and brutality. His collected poems are almost a history of the main issues that faced the Soviets at the time and cover a most surprising range of subjects. At home he declaimed against his countrymen's religious superstition, lack of hygiene, tendency to desert from the army, bad-mannered children, and ignorance of machinery. He urged them to buy at co-operative shops, to learn to fly, to use tractors, and not to complain about the increase of railway-fares. In foreign affairs he was no less eloquent. His visits to France and America did not impress him with the greatness of capitalistic civilisation, and his poem *150,000,000* is an almost hysterical defence of Russia against foreign countries. In *Mayakovsky's Portrait Gallery* he sketched satirical portraits of the foreign statesmen whom he most disliked, including Poincaré, Curzon, Mussolini and Pilsudski. He conducted controversy on the place of literature in the state, celebrated anniversaries and occasions of public rejoicing and mourning, and wrote a poem of almost epic dimensions on Lenin. Never was a poet more conscientious in serving the cause to which he has given his loyalty.

To create the effect that he desired and to win the public attention that he valued Mayakovsky transformed his style. He rid himself of his old allusive, telegraphic, oblique manner and created a style



suited to declamation. His versification is based on the number of stress accents in a line and disregards all unstressed syllables ; it is in fact a kind of 'sprung verse.' His rhymes are extremely free and include assonance, *le rime riche*, and compound rhymes such as we find in Browning. He had his verses printed to show their structure, and this makes them look stranger than they really are. They are in fact an admirable form of rhetoric, easy to declaim and easy to understand. His language keeps some of its old telegraphic conciseness but in a new, conversational way. If it neglects grammar, that is because talk also does. The result was that when Mayakovsky recited his work, it made a tremendous impression on his audiences and made them feel that after all there might be something in poetry. If we judge it by the highest standards, this poetry is certainly not first-class, perhaps not truly poetry at all. It is effective verse, meant to secure certain ends, which in fact it secured. And it has many literary virtues. It has enormous vitality, occasional flashes of fancy and of feeling, a notable satirical humour, and a great grasp of the significant details of ordinary life.

To achieve this success Mayakovsky sacrificed not only his old anarchistic independence but his most precious talent, his gift for a special kind of ecstatic lyrical poetry. This deep instinct drew him, as it drew Khlebnikov, to form the highest hopes of the Revolution, but once he had undertaken his revolutionary duties, he found that there was little outlet for it. It was too personal, too refined, too unpolitical. At times it flashes back, as in his charming poem *I love* (1922) which is an enchanting tissue of metaphysical conceits. It appears sometimes in more prosaic surroundings, as in *To Comrade Nette* (1926), where a ship named after an old friend is somehow identified with him as it comes to berth in the darkness. But on the whole Mayakovsky denied himself the use of his most individual gift when he set out to write public verse. In his last years his lyrical faculty seems to have strained towards release, and Mayakovsky tended to throw aside his didactic air for intimate revelations, as in his delightful *Very Good* which contains a lyrical statement of what he really liked and valued. If he had continued, he might have found a new field for the gift which he had for so long controlled and stifled.

The effort of will by which Mayakovsky turned himself from an anarchist and individualist into the voice of the Soviets was not made without heavy cost to himself. At intervals he fretted under the restrictions which his times and circumstances laid upon him, and he never endured criticism lightly. His natural outlet was in satire. In such a spirit he wrote two plays, *The Bath-House* and *The Bed-bug*, both of which were banned because they contained covert criticism of Russian conditions. Soon afterwards he shot

himself. No suicide can ever be fully explained, and Mayakovsky's may have been as irrational as most others. It shocked his admirers beyond words, and some of them have tried to explain that it was due to a Trotskyite conspiracy against him. If we must find an explanation, it seems more probable that at the last he could endure no longer the restrictions which he had taken upon himself and that his old anarchist soul reasserted itself in this act of destruction. His last verses, in which he complains of the harshness of contemporary customs, suggest that this is what he himself thought. He had condemned poor Esenin, who hung himself when starving, as an irresponsible drunkard; now history took her revenge on him and drove him to a similar end.

Mayakovsky still has followers and imitators in Russia. Among them Kirsanov has recently celebrated the opening of a Mayakovsky station on the Moscow Underground and used the master's own metre and system of rhymes. But something is missing—the peculiar revolutionary excitement which Mayakovsky was able to create and which was as much the product of Futurism as of the Revolution. Contemporary Russian poetry is going back to Pushkin and writes charming poems from which the explosive forces of Futurism have been eliminated. But in its day Futurism did something for Russian poetry. It abolished the grand style of the 'nineties and revived the language. For a short period it was an admirable means for conveying the irrational, unrealisable hopes of the Revolution. By an extraordinary paradox this instrument fashioned by the last inheritors of an over-civilised society seemed for a time to be proletarian art. The appearance was delusive, and the literary style of Futurism had to be sacrificed to keep a small portion of its spirit. Now even that has gone. It was a temporary compromise, an expression of revolt which no longer has any purpose when a new society and new rules have been firmly established.

## WHO HAS DESIRED THE SEA

BY ANNA KAVAN

THE late autumn sun came into the ward about two in the afternoon. There wasn't much strength in the sun which was slow in creeping round the edge of the blackout curtains so that it took a long time to reach the bed by the window.

He lay on the bed fully dressed and watched the sun clamber feebly from one empty bed to another all down the ward, rasping the folded dark army blankets with bristles of light. When it had investigated each iron bedstead the sun slipped down and stretched itself on the floor. The floor was polished and shiny, but where the sun lay a film of dust was revealed. Bars of shadow crossed the pale sun on the floor because of the paper strips pasted over the window. He noticed, as he had noticed on previous afternoons, how the horizontal lines looked like the shadows of prison bars. The association was vaguely unpleasant, and a vague uneasiness disturbed his preoccupation. There was no sense in the paper, anyhow, he thought. It wouldn't prevent the glass splintering if a bomb dropped anywhere near.

He turned his head to the window and the uneasiness disappeared. On the window itself the paper strips were translucent and honey coloured and no longer suggestive of prison bars.

Outside the window he could see the park with trees and grass and a drive curving through. There was a white board shaped like an arrow at the edge of the drive, pointing to the hospital with the words Neurosis Centre painted on it. The tall trees were practically leafless and their black branches swayed gravely and delicately in the wind. The short grass underneath was patched with tarnished brown-gold by the fallen leaves. In summer it would be an agreeable English scene; but now the dying autumnal leaves and the sea wind gave it some desolation.

The man on the bed knew that he ought to be with the other patients, many of whom were walking about outside, their bright hospital trouser-legs showing under their khaki great-coats. He ought to get up and put on his own overcoat which hung neatly on the hook by his bed, folded in the regulation way with the buttons fastened. He knew this was what he should do. But the knowledge had no relevance. It did not seem to apply directly to him. Something like glass came in between, dividing him from it. He lay quietly looking out of the window.

It was pass day, the day visitors were allowed, and some of the

soldiers out there had civilians with them, friends and relatives with whom they were going out for the afternoon. Some couples walked arm-in-arm, and there were a few family groups with children scuffing their feet through the fallen leaves. Most of those who had no visitors stepped out briskly towards the road leading to the shops, and the cinema. Only here and there an isolated patient walked slowly, with bent head, looking down on the ground, or wandered aimlessly on the grass as if he did not notice where he was going.

Before the eyes of the man in the ward the scattered figures outside moved in a pattern as remotely impersonal as that of the weaving branches or the seagulls circling against the sky. He saw these things with his blue, away-looking eyes, but he was not attending to them. He was looking for something, or rather someone, quite different: he was looking for a young man with thick brown awkward hair and a small scar on his cheek. For a long time he had been looking for this young man. It was absolutely necessary that he should find him. The man on the bed did not know how it was that he, whose life had become a lonely uncertainty, was so certain of this one thing. He did not at all understand it, but he did not question it either. He only knew with complete conviction that it was essential to him that this man should be found. Then, and not till then, he himself would be able to get outside the glass.

The sun was crawling weakly across the ward. The man stretched out and held his hand in the sun. He saw the sunshine on the back of his brown strong-fingered hand and felt the faint warmth. He felt the sunshine and saw it, but it was beyond the glass, it was not touching him really. After a moment he put his hand down again on the blanket beside him. He did not feel disappointed or troubled about the glass. He was used to it. It was queer how you got used to things, even to living inside a glass cell.

A picture of a clock drifted in front of him. It was an electric clock that had belonged to one of his aunts, it was made of brass with all its works showing, a skeleton of a clock inside a glass dome, and it never required winding. When he was a small boy there had seemed to him to be something horrific and fascinating and pathetic about the sight of the pendulum frantically swinging, swinging, swinging, perpetually exposed and driven in that transparent tomb.

A gust of wind rattled the window and blew the clock thousands of miles and days back to its mantelpiece. The man on the bed listened for the sound of waves in the wind. Although the sea was a good distance off it was possible sometimes to hear the waves break on the rocky shore. Now, as on every occasion when he was aware of the sea, a vague disquietude, restlessness, creased his forehead in anxious lines.

Now he was not able to attend to his watching, was the fear behind the anxiety. Now if the young man came near he might not be aware. The sea-sound was a distraction, interrupting his vigil.

- The wind died down again and the noise of the waves was no longer distinguishable. With the patients all out on passes the hospital seemed unnaturally still. The murmurous confusion of steps and voices, the opening and closing of doors which normally passed unnoticed became in absence obtrusive.

Without moving his body the man turned his head from the window and looked down the empty ward. The sun had now reached the wainscot and was starting to pull itself up the wall. Soon it would catch his greatcoat and mount above it and move on up to the ceiling. Then it would go altogether and leave the ward to the strengthening shadows. But before that happened he himself would be gone. There was something which had to be done. Something immensely difficult that had to be done by him while the afternoon sun still shone. It was something he would not be able to do. It was too difficult. It was impossible. But it was required of him. He would be obliged to attempt this impossible thing. He would not be allowed to evade the foredoomed attempt. They would come to the ward and fetch him away to make it.

So for these last few minutes he must wait with his whole attention for the young man with the thick untidy hair and the little scar. So he must hope that his twelfth-hour arrival would make everything plausible. Since the sea was quiet he had no more anxiety, and with the anxiety and the restlessness gone all that he felt was a great preoccupation and longing that the young man should appear. From the effort he would soon have to make he was now dissociated. For a moment it had seemed urgent; but now the glass shut it off. It was strange how dim and unurgent the glass made it.

If only he would come now, the man thought. He was looking along the length of the ward and watching the door. He always felt that the young man with the scar was more likely to come when there was no one about. Maybe he had something private to say, and that was why he would come when things were quiet. Well, the place was deserted enough now.

But then, inside the glass, the pendulum began madly swinging, swinging, making him feel confused. Pictures and confusion crowded inside the glass.

Now in the distance he saw the beach at Mairangi and the young man was standing there very tanned in his bathing slips, and that was the small scar on his cheek that he had got from the oyster shell on the rock swimming under water when he was eight years old. That was one of the things he was seeing, with, in the background,

Cape Promise and all the islands, the Sugar Loaf and The Noises, the little ones where the penguins went, and the one which was an extinct volcano. It was the strong southern sun that made the wattle burn like a yellow fire all along the creek. In Mairangi at Christmas time the sun was so strong it hurt your eyes for the first few seconds when you came out of the bach in the morning and ran down the beach to swim. That was the place where they dragged the boat over the warm sand, shells sharply warm on the foot soles, and where they had those great fishing trips out to the Barrier, the water as smooth and solid to look at as kauri gum and as blue as sapphires, and he remembered the clean splashless opening of the water as you dived into it like a knife.

But then the water was piled-up and ugly, another colour, another ocean, and that was another thing in the sky he was seeing and Shorty asking him if it were an F.W. and he looking up at it over the gun and saying, No, that's one of the escort 'planes. We're not in the range of the F.W.s yet. And Shorty repeating to the boys on the gun, No, it's one of ours. We're not in the range yet, and the others all saying, Must be one of the escorts. But it was a Focke Wulfe all right swooping over that evil water and it delivered them to it when the tanker's deck twisted, splintered and pulped and exploded in flame, and he remembered how the black water towered up and then the thousand-ton icy weight of it smashing down on them like a whale, the freezing, murderous bastard.

And now suddenly there was nothing but the skeleton in the transparent cell, brass midriff and spine, wheels and frangible springs, the hollow man, bloodless, heartless, headless; only the crazy pendulum swinging in place of head.

'Why are you up here? Don't you feel well?' the nurse said, coming into the ward.

'I'm all right,' he said. He looked at her and was glad because it was this nurse who had come for him, the pretty fair one, who would not make a fuss or ask too many questions.

'You haven't forgotten you've got a visitor, have you?' she said. 'You surely haven't forgotten about your fiancée coming? She's downstairs now and you ought to have been there to meet her. Did you forget today was visiting day?'

So, he thought, here it is: it's come now, the time when I have to do the impossible thing. And for a second he felt sick inside, but that passed, and he was behind the glass and feeling nothing at all.

'No, I hadn't forgotten,' he said.

He swung his legs off the bed and stood up tall and lean, and unhooked his coat while the nurse straightened the pillow and then came with him down the ward and waited while he held his comb



under the tap at the wash-basin and tugged at the unmanageable brown hair that never would lie flat whatever he did to it with water or brilliantine.

He saw the nurse watching, and said, 'This is a kind of experiment, isn't it? To see how I get on with Nora, I mean.'

'Doctor thinks it will do you good to see her,' she said. 'That's why he told her she could come down from London today. It's not going to be very easy for her, you know. She's been awfully worried about you. It's up to you to show her that you're going to be quite all right.'

'Yes,' he answered, out of the glass.

They were downstairs now at the door of the waiting-room. The nurse opened the door and stepped back and he went into the room which was empty except for the girl standing close to the window; quick smiling face and tapping heels, he watched her come quickly towards him now. Again he felt hollow sick because of the hopeless attempt, the effort which had to be made, thinking inside himself, Do I have to do this? Is it absolutely necessary to try this impossible thing? But then it passed, he felt her breath and her light kiss on his cheek, it was over, he was in his glass cell and it seemed quiet there and he felt nothing at all.

'It's a lovely afternoon,' the girl said presently. 'Shall we go for a walk?'

'All right.'

She was nervous, not knowing how to begin knowing him again, and, remembering his loose colonial stride and how he liked being out in the open places, she walked with him away from the town and the cinema where she would have felt at home.

She's a sweet girl really, he thought with a vague pang that was gone almost before he felt it at all. It was not her fault that he could not even feel sorry because she had come to him when he was no longer there. She was not in the least to blame. How could she know that he was a hollow thing; only wheels and a pendulum working inside a case? Because he had not found the young man with the scarred cheek he could not come to her through the glass.

She was talking to him as they walked in the thin sunshine beyond the hospital grounds. The sun was getting very low and the sea-gulls were flying low over the downs where they walked. He looked at her face between him and the sky. She was walking with her head turned to him and the sinking sun shone on her pleasantly powdered face and he could see that she was trying hard to make contact with him. He heard the sea make a noise just over the rise of the hill.

'No further,' he said, standing still. 'I don't want to go on any further.'



She looked at him with surprise and said, 'Don't you want to look at the sea? Let's just walk up to the top where we can see it now that we're here. It's quite close now.'

He felt the bad feeling come on him again, but this time there was no sickness, only a sudden sinking and emptiness, as when a small ship lurches and rolls suddenly: so that he waited for the crash and slither of loose objects falling: but there was only the wind and the gulls and the waves breaking below the edge of the hill. It passed, and he started to walk on again up the slope, because it did not matter really. Nothing mattered, he thought, because nothing could reach him while he was inside the glass.

'All right,' he said. 'Let's go and look at the sea.'

And really when he saw it it did not matter: it was quite easy to look at the agitated pale empty sea that was faintly touched with lilac feathers under the sunset sky. Except that he would rather not have seen the breaking waves on the rocks at the foot of the cliff. It was quite a high cliff to which the track had led them over the downs. The girl was looking out to sea and smiling with the wind blowing back the short bits of hair round her face.

'It's fine up here, isn't it?' she said to him.

'No,' he said. 'It's the wrong sea.'

He saw the bewilderment and distress and incomprehension come instead of the smile on her face because of what he had said; and he thought that he ought to try and explain something, but it was impossible because there was nothing but the swinging pendulum with which to explain.

And at the same time he saw on sunnier cliffs barelegged girls, perhaps his sisters, riding barebacked on ponies with rough manes flying, he saw the bleached gilt hairs on the brown girls' legs and heard girls' high voices calling and laughing often.

'You've always been mad on the sea,' a girl's voice was saying.

Yes, the sea was the one thing he had always been crazy about. But what had become of those other oceans? What had become of the sapphire blue deep water, the quick, clear small waves on the beaches, the purple submerged peninsulas of the reefs? Now he remembered the steady smooth rush of the sailing boat through blue sunlit water and the satisfactory slap of water on the sides of the boat. He remembered the huge seas marching past the tanker, huge and heavy and whale coloured, marching in manic persistence, the staggering deck, the water bursting endlessly over the catwalk. And for a second he remembered the time on the gun when they brought the 'plane down at sunrise, and for a second he was that young gunner triumphant and in his glory, the sea lunging pink-stained into oblivion past the gun-sights. Then he remembered the horror

that came later, the freezing, strangling, devilish masses of water, the horror of blazing oil on the water and Shorty screaming out of the flaming water. Then the cold blankness settled again and he could not remember whether he had known these things or what had become of them.

Now it was this town girl he had met on leave in the city to whom he had to attend. She was a good-looking girl; and perhaps before the glass closed round him he had felt something for her, but now there was just this impossible thing, this effort he could not make. He knew he ought to explain something. She was trying to be sweet and kind to him. But he knew he could never do the impossible thing. And just then it occurred to him that he was shaking under his khaki coat.

'What is it, Lennie?' she asked him.

'Nothing,' he said. 'It's cold standing around. Let's walk into town and get tea there. Let's get away from the sea.'

'Don't you like the sea any more?' she asked. She was looking at him walking away from the cliff and biting her lip.

'No,' said the man. 'I don't think so. I think I hate it.'

But then, feeling the hollow, vague coldness inside the glass, and going away from the sea, there was nothing at all left and nothing mattered at all.

'I don't feel anything about it,' he said. 'I don't feel anything about anything.'

On the way to the town she took his arm and they walked like that for a bit while he thought of the effort which he was required to make. He had known all the time he would not be able to make it. He knew that he had to do this tremendous thing and he wanted to do it and it was his duty to do it; but he knew that it was impossible, that he would never make the attempt now, and soon she unlinked her arm and began telling him about a picture with Spencer Tracy.

In the tea place where they sat down together it was half dark already and lamps were lighted. Drinking strong tea, with no anxiety left except the ache of the unmade and abandoned effort, the girl pouring the tea, the warmth of it spreading through him, he could feel the beginning of comfort after the dusk and the sea wind. While the waitress fastened the blackout they drank, and just as the blackout was fixed and it was impossible to see out any longer, something thundered outside with a noise like a heavy sea and the man started and slopped his tea in the saucer.

'The buses stop just outside here,' the girl said. 'It's the market place and they all stop here.'

'What a filthy row,' he said, feeling the evil sickness on him again, knowing that he was shaking again under his coat. So this

was how he lived now, getting jittery because a bus pulled up near. Well, he was not going on like that. It was not good enough. The one person who could help him had not appeared. He probably never would. But there must be some other way. He knew that there was another way although for the moment he couldn't think what it was. Soon it would come back to him, in a minute he would remember the way out, the way where he was going.

'Are you feeling all right?' the girl said. She had put her arms on the table and was leaning towards him.

'Of course.'

'Why don't you eat your cake?'

'I'm going to.'

The cake was too dry. He had to hold it in his mouth after he'd chewed it and then by taking a gulp of tea he was just able to wash it down without retching.

He put the cup carefully back on the saucer so that it didn't rattle. The girl touched his hand with her fingers.

'Don't you like me any more either?' she said.

'I can't explain,' he said. 'I can't help it.'

The sickness had come up in his throat now and his lungs, and he could feel it strangling him and he was drowning again in the four-mile deep icy horror of sickness or water. He looked at the girl and saw that she was crying.

'It's no good. I can't do it,' he said.

Then he pushed back his chair and stood up quickly because, just then, he saw the young man's face in a mirror up on the wall, he saw the thick wind-ruffled hair and the little scar on the cheekbone. The face moved in the mirror and when he looked round he could not see it anywhere in the room, and when he wanted to call out the sickness choked him, and now he tried to fight off the icy sickness, but like whales the waves of it fell on him till he was pounded and drowned, and while he froze suffocating and could not move or breathe, he heard the girl say, 'Where are you going?' and then he was able to move suddenly, and he got out of the tea-room.

It was evening and too dark to distinguish faces when he was in the street.

I wouldn't recognise him even if I knew which way he had gone, the man thought, hurrying along the dark streets, looking at the strange people he passed in the dark, who passed without looking at him. Once a bus went roaring by with a smell of burnt oil and he felt the sickness coming at him again, but he fought it back and walked faster and it was all right and he was only a hollow man walking in the darkness without objective. Once a stranger asked him where he was going, but he went on without stopping to think that he did not know the answer. And once somewhere far off in

the dark something hurt for a second because of the girl left alone and crying : but that was over immediately.

Then he was out of the town and the moon was up but behind cloud and it was less dark, and then he was walking on grass and he could see the heavy black swelling shapes of the downs, and the clouds sculptured in towers and buttresses and battlemented with the light of the climbing moon. Then there was first the smell and then the sound of the sea. Then there were cliffs and the cold tumultuous restless water beneath.

Then instead of hurrying he was standing still ; he was very tired now and sweating under the heavy coat, and looking up he saw a white shining fan, spreading over the sky, like light from a door slowly opening, and he knew the moon was coming out of the clouds. Then he looked over the sea and there were islands it seemed, and then a great migration of birds thickened the air and he was in a rushing of wings, the wings beat so dark and fast round him he felt dizzy like falling and the moon disappeared. And then it was clear again, brilliant moonlight, and there, ahead, bright as day, were all the small islands, Cape Promise, and the bay of Mairangi, wide, still, unbelievably peaceful under the full moon. And then he did know where he was going.

## TURKISH MANIS

(Popular Turkish Poems from Anatolia)

MANI is the Turkish name for the short poems composed by the peasant poets of Anatolia. These popular poems, some of them centuries old, were composed by wandering poets who used to go round the wild villages of Anatolia and recite them to the peasants as they sat in their little cafés or at village feasts. These Manis are of unknown authorship, and they have been handed down to the present generations by word of mouth. It is impossible to date them, especially as new ones are still being written.

At the beginning of this century, patriotic Turkish scholars went round Anatolia and made a collection of the Manis, later published in book form. Written in pure Turkish, these brief quatrains were very different from the Court poetry written for the Sultans which was full of Persian and Arabic words. The Manis, being essentially of the Turkish soil and spirit, have had a great influence on the young poets of the Turkish Republic. For the Mani with its concise quatrain sums up the essence of the new Turkish poetry. At times, bitter and grimly realistic, at others, passionate and full of sensuous images, the Anatolian Mani reveals an unexpected side of the Turkish character, in direct contrast to the charming, image-laden verses of the Persian and Arabic poets. At the same time, some of these Manis are astonishingly modern in their imagery and technique.

The Manis, apart from their beauty and originality, are important because they give us a key to the understanding of Modern Turkish poetry—so far, practically unknown to Western readers. For Turkish poetry of today is one of the direct results of the Kemalist Revolution. When Kemal Atatürk decided to reform the Turkish language after the creation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 and founded the Turkish Language Association in 1928, he introduced measures which purged Turkish of the many Arabic and Persian words which had crept into the language during the long centuries of the Ottoman Empire, and finally liberated Turkish literature from the strong Persian influence which had persisted in the courts of the great Sultans. Today, the modern Turk speaks and writes a language very different from that used during the Empire. Indeed, the change has been so drastic that most young Turks cannot read the classic poets of the Ottoman period. This gulf between Ottoman and Modern Turkish poetry, caused by the language reform, has made Turkish poetry very nationalistic and forced the young poets to seek inspiration from the popular poets of Anatolia—the unknown men who wrote these Manis, which are now translated into English for the first time.

Your breath smells of roses,  
Is there a garden within you?  
A stranger's glance has left its mark upon your face,  
Who has looked at you, my love?

---

Love, it seems is a shirt of fire,  
Had I known I would not have worn it.  
I have buried so many things in me  
That I have become a little grave.

---

I am the comb in your hair.  
I am the dust in your path.  
Which one of you, my black-eyed ones,  
Which one of you will be my mother?

---

A minaret under the sea.  
A wave pounding on the wall.  
And this slight breeze, blowing  
You and me apart.

---

Poplar trees along the road.  
Green leaves on the poplar trees.  
I could not have my love.  
Let the cruel earth have her!

---

The mountains have wounded me!  
All those who saw me wept.  
Iron chains have no power,  
Your hair has chained me.

---

Take grapes from the vineyards!  
Take tears from the waterfalls!  
See, I am going now.  
Let the mountains give news of me!

DEREK PATMORE

## PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST : THE YOUNG GIBBON

THE atmosphere of the eighteenth century was less clouded than our own. Its movements seem more precise because they were more leisurely. The voyagings of its characters have an air of symbolic significance, lost in the confused rapidity of modern travel. Boswell reached London for the second time towards the close of November 1762 ; a few weeks later, by post-chaise and packet-boat, Edward Gibbon hurried away on the Grand Tour. For him, too, it was a decisive journey. Behind him lay several years spent in the militia, years which, although they had been educative, had not been entertaining. Cheerfully, he had thrown aside the regimentals that suited him so ill—the trappings of the South Hampshire Grenadiers with the motto *Falces conflantur in enses*, suggested by himself—and then, after a brief stay at his father's country house, set about collecting the various letters of introduction he was to take with him to Paris. Both the sedate assiduity with which he laid his plans, and his annoyance when the French ambassador received him 'more as a man of letters than as a man of fashion,' are characteristic of the basic quality of Gibbon's character. Like Boswell, he valued himself on his birth and breeding, and was not dissatisfied with what he had already learned of his talents and capabilities ; but whereas Boswell's form of self-love was often self-destructive, it was part of Gibbon's genius to be usually his own best friend. In this happy gift he may have been strengthened by the experiences of childhood ; and if his vital spark burned with a smooth and steady glow, diffusing a constant but moderate warmth through all his faculties, that no doubt was because during the first fifteen years of his life again and again it had seemed to be flickering towards extinction.

Naturally he valued and husbanded what he had so nearly lost ; and looking around him, surveying the position he had inherited, the free, prosperous country in which he had been born and the happy, enlightened century of which he was a product, Edward Gibbon considered dispassionately that he had had much to lose. From his family, for example, he derived all the advantages that go with a certain degree of security but none of the disadvantages of down-right affluence. They were a credit to him, moreover, this assemblage of country gentlemen and merchants, the Gibbons and the Portens, who, though they had never risen to high rank, had held their possessions and maintained their dignity and independence for several hundred years. Such families are celebrated in the memorials of innumerable English country churches, with their blazons and their quarterings, their modest or pompous epitaphs, their effigies, ruffed



or periwigged, placed high on the wall among classical wreaths and pediments or reclining at full length, in alabaster, beneath the gilded and marbled canopies of Elizabethan tombs. During the period that preceded the Industrial Revolution and the first and second Reform Bills, the landed middle-class, merging on the one hand into the aristocracy, on the other linked by many ties with the world of commerce, constituted the most representative, respectable and also, perhaps, the most influential section of the English social structure; and out of their midst, from the marriage of Judith Porten and Edward Gibbon, a descendant of the squires of Rolvenden in the Weald of Kent, was born Edward Gibbon the younger, at the pleasant Thames-side village of Putney in April 1737.

Following him into the world came five brothers and a sister. But as parents Mr. and Mrs. Gibbon, even for that period, proved unusually ill-fated, since all their children, with the exception of the eldest, died in early infancy. Nor did it seem likely that Edward had long to live. A puny, unhealthy child, he suffered for many years from a painful nervous cramp and other infantile disorders both 'various and frequent.'<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Gibbon, weakened by repeated childbirths, concentrated such remaining energies as she possessed in attachment to her husband; the care of Edward fell to his aunt, Mrs. Catherine Porten, who nursed and brooded over him with intense devotion. She was 'the true mother (he afterwards declared) of my mind as well as of my health.' It was she who confirmed him in his love of reading and introduced him to Pope's translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, 'the two first books of which I retain a distinct and pleasing idea.' The little regular training he received was desultory and intermittent. No sooner had he been placed at a school than illness snatched him away; and after a couple of terms spent at Westminster, where he lived in the boarding-house his aunt had set up on the loss of her father's fortune, he was removed to Bath, then to Winchester, then back again to Putney and the Gibbons' house at Buriton. His mother had died, from the effects of her latest childbirth, in 1747; and Mr. Gibbon, a capricious, inconstant character, prone to sudden decisions and rapid changes of mood, had thereupon abandoned himself to a dramatic excess of grief, given up his parliamentary schemes—he had sat at one moment as a member for Southampton—said good-bye to the social world, of which during his wife's existence he had been an assiduous frequenter and resolved to return to the placid ranks of the Hampshire landed gentry.

<sup>1</sup> They included, according to one of Gibbon's autobiographical drafts, Memoir C, 'fevers and lethargies, a fistula in the eye, a tendency to a consumptive and to a dropsical habit, a contraction of the nerves, with a variety of nameless disorders. And, as if the plagues of nature were not sufficient without the concurrence of accident, I was once bit by a dog most vehemently suspected of madness.'

Thus Buriton Manor became Gibbon's background—such a house as only England produces, neither small nor very large, an unconscious mixture of different architectural periods, with its imposing Georgian front (raised by Gibbons's grandfather, the successful business man) tacked on to a low rambling Elizabethan structure. There were farm-buildings around it, and nearby stood the church. Whale-backed downs and 'long hanging woods' completed the pastoral landscape; and in these surroundings life continued in a simple and regular pattern, varied, when the roads were dry and the moon was full, by excursions in the family's coach to neighbouring country seats. Gibbon, during his later years, might deplore the monotony of this existence, but he appreciated its solidity. Certainly he did not rebel against it; impulses of revolt played no part in that serious but equable nature, which already turned from the world of action to the sphere of imagination. Nevertheless the prospects that confronted him were bleak and over-shadowed; and he might well have come to manhood 'an illiterate cripple,' had he not during mid-adolescence, between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, reached and passed through one of those mysterious climacterics in which the whole constitution of the body seems suddenly to change and its energies to receive a new and surprising impetus. For no reason the physicians could determine, his ailments vanished away. Henceforward, though never robust, he was seldom troubled by illness; and Mr. Gibbon, thinking that the moment had now come to resume his education, placed him at Esher in the house of a certain Reverend Mr. Philip Francis, a clergyman who had translated Horace but soon proved to have no other qualifications as educationalist or guardian, since he was more often to be found diverting himself in London than at home among his pupils. Mr. Gibbon then took one of the abrupt, thoughtless decisions to which he had always been addicted and, sweeping his son off to Oxford without preparation, and almost without warning, entered him as a Gentleman Commoner at Magdalen College before he had quite arrived at his fifteenth birthday.

The effects of this inconsiderate gesture were certainly far-reaching; but, as has so often happened, the influence of Oxford on Gibbon's development was very largely negative. Out of the fourteen months of frustrated idleness he was to spend at Magdalen, dawdling on the threshold of a gate that none of those about him troubled to unlock, came no positive improvement in his knowledge of men or letters. Oxford gave him a casual, if a not unkindly, welcome; but in the dreamy maze of University life there was nothing he could grasp, little he could admire; he arrived at Oxford hungering for knowledge, and went away unsatisfied. Afterwards he was to crystallise his disappointment in one of the most famous and envenomed

passages of his autobiography. As an essay in literary invective, the six or seven long measured paragraphs, into which Gibbon concentrated his scorn and detestation of the University, set a standard that the modern biographer dare not attempt to rival. Here and there, nevertheless, one may append a footnote; for, although both Gibbon's narrative and the style in which he unfolds it are extraordinarily revealing, they reveal Gibbon in the flush of his triumphant middle age. Far behind him was the innocent, awkward Gentleman Commoner of Magdalen; and just as he had declined to dwell on the nature of his childish illnesses, since they were a subject too tedious and too 'disgusting' for adult contemplation, so the origin of many of his youthful misfortunes is left largely unexplained. With few friends of his own age to teach him to enjoy himself, and no encouragement from older members of the University (those 'decent easy men,' whose 'conversation stagnated in a round of college business, Tory politics, personal anecdotes, and private scandal,' whose 'dull and deep potations excused the brisk intemperance of youth') to encourage him to develop the random studies he had already begun at home, it is not unnatural that Gibbon should have been bored and restive, or that, finding his tutor would always accept excuses, he should have set out during term-time on 'costly and dangerous frolics' as far afield as Bath in one direction and London in another. It is more surprising that, from the sunny emptiness of his life at Oxford, he should have taken refuge in the dark labyrinths of religious speculation.

Yes, there had been a time (the adult Gibbon was obliged to admit) when theology had absorbed him. From his childhood he had liked disputing on points of doctrine—poor Mrs. Porten was often puzzled to defend the mysteries of a faith in which she had not yet ceased to believe; and thus it came about that, in the mood of 'blind activity' through which he was now passing, Gibbon began to examine his own faith with a bewildered and critical eye. How he progressed, and whether it was Bossuet or Parsons, the Elizabeth Jesuit, who completed his conversion, is to-day of very small importance. In fact, during the course of a solitary excursion to London, he enquired at a Catholic bookseller's in Covent Garden for a priest who could instruct him, was recommended to the Chaplain of the Sardinian Ambassador and by him solemnly received into the Roman Catholic Church on the 8th of June, 1753. 'Youth' (he was to write at a later period, tolerantly, it is true, yet perhaps not altogether unregretfully) 'is sincere and impetuous; . . . a momentary glow of enthusiasm had raised me above all temporal considerations.' That it was impossible to ignore such considerations, however, very soon became apparent. 'An elaborate controversial epistle,' approved by his director, had broken the news, not very gently, to Mr. Gibbon,

at Buriton, who, in his usual impetuous way, at once divulged the whole story to the University authorities. From the point of view of the fellows of Magdalen, sympathetic as they might have shown themselves towards almost any other shortcoming, public apostasy ranked as a crime that admitted of no excuse : and Gibbon's University career was brought to a sudden end. Far worse, after much discussion with various friends and advisers, Mr. Gibbon decided that his son's predicament called for a strenuous remedy. In deep disgrace, during the same month that had witnessed his conversion, Edward Gibbon, at the age of sixteen, was ordered out of England.

The rebel went as he was commanded—he had no alternative : with the result that, at the beginning of July, Monsieur Pavilliard, a learned Calvinist minister of Lausanne, gazed in astonishment at the strange spectacle presented by a very small Englishman, whose diminutive body supported an enormous head, standing before him and eloquently urging the case for Romanism by means of the best arguments that the minister had ever heard put forward. Gibbon was to remain at Lausanne for nearly five years ; and at a very early stage a measure of respect, bordering on affection, developed between the Swiss master and his curiously gifted pupil. Gibbon put up a stiff fight in defence of his new-found creed ; but his spiritual obstinacy (Pavilliard soon distinguished) was accompanied by a strong backing of intellectual honesty. '*Il n'est pas*' (wrote Pavilliard to Mr. Gibbon) '*ce qu'on appelle chicaneur.*' Another young man might have collapsed completely, have been insolent, peevish, insubordinate or withdrawn into sulky silence : Pavilliard's pupil kept his dignity and continued to dispute his ground. He experienced, nevertheless, all the gloom of the exile's life—in a household whose language he had not yet learned to speak, among surroundings that contrasted painfully with the substantial elegance that had encircled him at Buriton and Oxford. Madame Pavilliard proved 'ugly, dirty, proud, ill-tempered and covetous.' Her table-cloths were soiled ; the warmed-up legs of mutton she served her *pensionnaires* were meagre and unappetising ; grim stoves took the place of blazing open fires ; the room to which Gibbon had been assigned was small and cold and squalid. Moreover, Monsieur Pavilliard had been instructed to allow him at first very little money. Lost to the faith of his childhood and cast off by his father, too poor to make an advantageous appearance in the company of his fellow Englishmen who passed through Switzerland, still half a boy and, in spite of much desultory reading, more than half uneducated, he was a youth as forlorn and solitary as any in Lausanne.

Self-pity, however, even at the age of sixteen, was not among his failings. Thrown back on his own resources, he began for the first time, under Pavilliard's guidance, to drive his way through the classics

with systematic application. He read, translated and compared. So long as one read one need never be unhappy, absorbed in the gradual development of some mighty intellectual prospect, seen dimly at first through a fog of ignorance, more and more distinctly discerned as one stumbled slowly forward, till the whole landscape came into range, territory on territory up to the furthest skyline, magnificent with the works of the past, cities and fortresses and roads and aqueducts, multitudinous with the marches and countermarches, the migrations, feuds and alliances of unnumbered human beings. It was not so much that he was concerned to escape from the present day—though the splendid images evoked by some Roman historian were certainly a very welcome relief from the impression made by soiled table cloths and cramped, uncleanly rooms; but the past gave to the present the justification that it needed, suggested a continuity in human affairs that at a first glance seems often strangely lacking, supplied the perspective essential to a clear and dispassionate view. At thirteen, writing to Mrs. Porten in the earliest letter extant among his archives, he had described how, on a country expedition, he had examined 'the Remains of an ancient Camp which pleased me vastly;' and the boy who, stepping from the family coach, had surveyed with delight the huge grassy earthworks, the trackways, moats and enclosures of some prehistoric settlement lost in the lonely undulations of the Wiltshire or Hampshire downs, felt his excitement spring up afresh as he explored the monumental achievements of the Roman poets and historians, and discovered an immense new world of experience which completed and enclosed his own. Little by little, thanks to the promptings of Monsieur Pavilliard, the effects of separation from his family, but most of all, the pleasure he had now learned to take in thinking for himself, the 'honourable and important part' he had hitherto played, as convert, enthusiast and religious exile, grew less and less attractive. Learning was his true mistress, faith a passing love; years later, he remembered his 'solitary transport' when he hit upon a philosophic argument against the mystery of transubstantiation; and on Christmas Day 1754, after nearly eighteen months of polite discussion, carried through without the smallest hint of acrimony between the pastor and his pupil, he received the sacrament and was readmitted to the arms of the Protestant Church.

*(It is hoped in forthcoming issues to print further episodes from the unfinished work of which this fragment forms a part.)*

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